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# United States Department of the Interior

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## Memorandum

To: Directorate and Field Directorate  
Attention: Superintendents and Center Managers

From: Assistant Associate Director, Park Cultural Resources

Subject: Issuance of *Museum Handbook*, Part III, Museum Collections Use, Chapter 8,  
Using Museum Collections in Historic Furnished Structures

We are pleased to issue the latest addition to *Museum Handbook*, Part III, Museum Collections Use: Chapter 8: Using Museum Collections in Historic Furnished Structures. A revised table of contents for the *Handbook* is included.

Chapter 8: Using Museum Collections in Historic Furnished Structures covers a range of issues related to furnishing historic interiors with museum collections. It outlines the steps to research and plan a historic furnishings project, how to produce and install furnishings in a historic structure, preservation and maintenance, and documentation of furnishings contained in a historic structure. Interpretation and evaluation of historic furnished structures are also discussed. The chapter includes checklists to assist in planning and implementing the furnishing of historic interiors, and to address preventive conservation within the historic furnished interior. It also provides sample wording to develop a historic furnishings report, as well as annotated guidelines for completing a historic furnishings report prepared by Harpers Ferry Center, Department of Planning and Research.

Attachment

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Access and Use Team (AUT), Museum Management Program (MMP), Cultural Resources, coordinates the NPS *Museum Handbook*, Part III, Museum Collections Use. AUT members, with contributions from selected NPS and other museum professionals, wrote the chapters and appendices. AUT members who developed the new *Museum Handbook*, Part III are Joan Bacharach, Museum Curator, Virginia Kilby, Staff Curator, and Diane Vogt O'Connor, Senior Archivist, National Park Service (NPS) Museum Management Program. Joan Bacharach is the team and project coordinator, and *Museum Handbook III* editor. Lea Anne Chapman, Program Assistant, MMP, assisted with layout and format, and Cynthia Murdock did layout, formatting and copyediting.

*Museum Handbook*, Part III authors are:

Chapter 1: - Virginia Kilby, Diane Vogt O'Connor, and Joan Bacharach. Jane Gray, Ethnographer, Archeology and Ethnography Program, Cultural Resources (Section E) and Sandy Weber, Interpretive Specialist, Division of Interpretation, Washington Office (Section H) contributed to the chapter.

Chapter 2: - Diane Vogt O'Connor. Updated by Carla Mattix, Department of the Interior, Office of the Solicitor and Joan Bacharach.

Chapter 3: - Diane Vogt O'Connor and Joan Bacharach (Sections G, and I). Brian Jones, Chief, Department of Audiovisual Arts, Harpers Ferry Center (Section G), and Tom Valentine, Chief, Audio-Visual Services, National Gallery of Art (Section I) also contributed.

Chapter 4: - Diane Vogt-O'Connor.

Chapter 5: - Joan Bacharach.

Chapter 6: - Joan Bacharach.

Chapter 7: - Joan Bacharach. Toby Raphael, Harpers Ferry Center, Department of Conservation also contributed (Sections H, I, and J).

Chapter 8: - John Brucksch, Supervisory Staff Curator, Harpers Ferry Center, and Joan Bacharach.

Appendix A: - Diane Vogt O'Connor.

Appendix D: - Donald Cumberland, Museum Specialist, MMP.

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NPS *Museum Handbook* Steering Committee (1991-3) who guided an early outline of the Handbook are Michele Aubry, Senior Archeologist, Anthropology Division, Washington Office; Betty Browning, Museum Curator, Valley Forge National Historical Park; John Brucksch, Staff Curator, Historic Furnishing Division, Harpers Ferry Center; Dan Chure, Paleontologist/Curator Dinosaur National Park; Trinkle Jones, Archeologist, Western Archeological and Conservation Center; Dale Durham, Regional Curator, Southeast Region; Steve Harrison, Deputy Regional Curator, Southeast Regional Office; Diane Nicholson, Museum Curator, Golden Gate National Recreation Area; Sarah Olson, Chief, Historic Furnishings Division, Harpers Ferry Center; Carolyn Rose, Senior Research Conservator, National Museum of Natural History, Department of Anthropology, Smithsonian Institution; Virginia Salazar,

Regional Curator, Southwest Regional Office; Jim Thomson, Regional Archeologist, Pacific Northwest Regional Office; Sandy Weber, Interpretive Specialist, Division of Interpretation, Washington Office; and Tony Knapp, Staff Curator and committee coordinator, Virginia Kilby, Staff Curator, and Ann Hitchcock, Chief Curator, Washington Office, ex-officio members. Members are listed by the institutions where they worked during their term of office on the committee.



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
INTRODUCTION .....	iii
<b>1. EVALUATING AND DOCUMENTING MUSEUM COLLECTIONS USE</b>	
A. Overview .....	1:1
B. Evaluating Proposed Use of Collections .....	1:2
C. Management Issues .....	1:5
D. Ethical Issues .....	1:13
E. Cultural Issues .....	1:26
F. Scientific Issues .....	1:36
G. Preservation and Protection Issues .....	1:39
H. Interpretation Issues .....	1:49
I. User Qualifications .....	1:51
J. Documentation .....	1:53
K. Checklist: Evaluating a Request to Use Museum Objects .....	1:55
L. Bibliography .....	1:57
<b>2. LEGAL ISSUES</b>	
A. Overview .....	2:1
B. Access and Use Legislation .....	2:5
C. Copyright Laws .....	2:6
D. Freedom of Information Act .....	2:25
E. Location Information .....	2:28
F. Privacy and Publicity Legislation .....	2:31
G. Other Legal Issues .....	2:38
H. Patent Laws .....	2:40
I. Trademarks and Servicemarks .....	2:41
J. List of Figures .....	2:42
K. Bibliography .....	2:51
<b>3. PUBLICATIONS</b>	
A. Overview .....	3:1
B. Legal Issues Specific to Publications Using Museum Collections .....	3:4
C. User Requirements .....	3:4
D. Documentation .....	3:8
E. General Information on Producing a Publication .....	3:9
F. Producing Paper Media .....	3:37
G. Producing Moving Images .....	3:50
H. Producing Multimedia .....	3:55
I. Producing Sound Recordings .....	3:60
J. Identifying and Developing Special Skills .....	3:65
K. Annotated Selected Bibliography .....	3:68
L. List of Figures .....	3:71
<b>4. TWO-DIMENSIONAL REPRODUCTIONS</b>	
A. Overview .....	4:1
B. Preliminary Policy and Planning Considerations .....	4:17
C. 2-D Reproductions Management Implementation Issues .....	4:39
D. Glossary .....	4:58
E. Selected Bibliography .....	4:63
F. List of Figures .....	4:68

**5. THREE-DIMENSIONAL REPRODUCTIONS**

A. Overview .....	5:1
B. Preliminary Policy and Planning Considerations .....	5:4
C. Reproductions for NPS Purposes .....	5:7
D. Reproductions for non-NPS Purposes .....	5:10
E. Reproduction Agreements .....	5:11
F. Developing a Standard Operation Procedure for Reproductions by NPS and by Agreement with Others .....	5:17
G. Producing a Reproduction .....	5:19
H. Selected Glossary .....	5:23
I. Selected Bibliography .....	5:24
J. List of Figures .....	5:25

**6. OTHER USES OF MUSEUM COLLECTIONS**

A. Overview .....	6:1
B. Management Concerns .....	6:2
C. General NPS Policy on Filming and Photography .....	6:8
D. Filming and Photography in Spaces Housing Museum Collections .....	6:9
E. Special Events in an Exhibit and Other Spaces Housing Museum Collections .....	6:13
F. Museum Objects in Working Order .....	6:18
G. Museum Objects Used in Performances, Sound Productions or Demonstrations .....	6:23
H. Other Uses of Museum Objects in Educational, Interpretative and Other Programs and Activities .....	6:25
I. Selected Bibliography .....	6:29
J. List of Figures .....	6:29

**7. USING MUSEUM COLLECTIONS IN EXHIBITS**

A. Overview .....	7:1
B. Finding Background Information .....	7:2
C. Getting Started .....	7:7
D. Defining the Purpose and Audience .....	7:12
E. Planning and Designing Exhibits .....	7:17
F. Producing and Installing Exhibits .....	7:23
G. Exhibit Planning, Design, Production, and Installation Documents .....	7:25
H. Exhibit Conservation .....	7:27
I. Preserving and Protecting Objects in the Exhibit Process .....	7:30
J. Exhibit Case Design .....	7:36
K. Traveling and Non-NPS Initiated Exhibits .....	7:39
L. Exhibit Funding and Outreach .....	7:41
M. Documenting Collections on Exhibit .....	7:45
N. Evaluating Exhibits .....	7:49
O. Maintaining Exhibits .....	7:52
P. Rehabilitating Exhibits .....	7:56
Q. Selected Bibliography .....	7:57
R. List of Figures .....	7:58

**8. USING MUSEUM COLLECTIONS IN HISTORIC FURNISHED STRUCTURES**

A. Overview .....	8:1
B. Finding Background Information to Furnish a Historic Structure .....	8:4
C. Getting Started .....	8:8
D. Planning Historic Furnishings Projects .....	8:12
E. Producing and Installing Historic Furnishings .....	8:21
F. Preservation and Maintenance .....	8:25
G. Documenting Historic Furnishings on Exhibit .....	8:30

	<u>Page</u>
H. Interpreting Furnished Historic Interiors.....	8:32
I. Evaluating Historic Furnishings.....	8:35
J. Rehabilitating Historic Furnishings Installations.....	8:37
K. Selected Bibliography.....	8:37
L. List of Figures.....	8:39





## APPENDICES

	<u>Page</u>
<b>A. PUBLICATIONS GLOSSARY .....</b>	<b>A:1</b>
<b>B. GUIDANCE ON PLANNING FOR A RESEARCH SPACE</b>	
A. Research Space Definition and Use .....	D:1
B. Research Space Standards .....	D:2
C. Security .....	D:2
D. Environmental Conditions .....	D:3
E. Space Issues .....	D:4
F. Researcher Staging Area .....	D:4
G. Equipment for Research Space .....	D:5
H. Access for Researchers with Disabilities .....	D:5
I. Utilities .....	D:6
J. Planning for Research Space in a New Facility .....	D:6
K. Upgrading Your Facility for Research Space .....	D:6
L. Using the Research Space .....	D:8





## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure Number	Caption	Page
2.1	Access and Use Legal Action Chart .....	2:43
2.2	Sample License Agreement.....	2:50
3.1	Master Checklist for Publication Project (Sample) [Optional] .....	3:72
3.2	Intellectual Property Permission Request (Sample) [Optional].....	3:75
3.3	Research Sheet (Sample) [Optional] .....	3:76
3.4	Assignment of Copyright by Contractor (Sample) .....	3:77
3.5	Cooperative Publishing Agreement (Sample) [Optional] .....	3:78
3.6	Model Release Form 1.....	3:80
3.7	Model Release Form 2.....	3:81
3.8	Paper Printing Job Organizer (Sample) [Optional] .....	3:82
3.9	Museum Management Program Editing Checklist (Sample) [Optional] .....	3:84
3.10	Museum Management Program Proofreaders' Checklist (Sample) [Optional].....	3:87
3.11	Digital Publication Project Checklist (Sample) [Optional] .....	3:89
3.12	Memorandum of Agreement (Sample) [Optional] .....	3:97
3.13	Selected Foundations that Fund Publications .....	3:101
4.1	How to Select an Appropriate Process or Format of Reproduction for each Reproduction Purpose or Function.....	4:69
4.2	Reproduction Order Notification Sheet .....	4:70
4.3	Comparison of the Advantages and Disadvantages of 2-D Copy Formats (Sample) .....	4:71
4.4	2-D Reproductions Cost Recovery Chart for Estimating Time Spent (Sample) .....	4:76
4.5	Cost-recovery Fees Formula (Sample).....	4:77
4.6	Permission to Publish Letter (Sample) .....	4:78
4.7	Wording to be Included in a 2-D Independent Contractor Agreement (Sample).....	4:79
5.1	Sample Wording to Include in a Contract between the NPS and a Contractor when a Reproduction is to be Made for In-house Use. ....	5:25
5.2	Sample Wording to Include in an Agreement Authorizing the Park Cooperating Association to Produce Three-dimensional Reproductions on Behalf of the Park.....	5:27
5.3	Sample Wording to Include in an Agreement between the Park and an Organization to Produce a Three-dimensional Reproduction for Sale and Distribution. ....	5:31
5.4	Sample Wording to Include in a Contract between the Park and a Contractor to Produce a Three-dimensional Reproduction for Sale and Distribution. ....	5:35
6.1	Hold Harmless or Liability Clause to be Included in a Special Use Permit .....	6:30
6.2	Documents Needed for Other Uses of Museum Objects.....	6:31
6.3	Sample Conditions to Attach to a Special Use Permit in Spaces Housing Museum Collections.....	6:32
7.1	Sample Wording for a Park Project Agreement with Harpers Ferry Center, Department of Exhibits.....	7:59
7.2	Sample Fabrication and Installation Contract Wording.....	7:64
7.3	Park Exhibit Checklist.....	7:68
7.4	Exhibit Conservation Checklist.....	7:72
8.1	Checklist for Exhibit Museum Collections in a Furnished Historic Interior.....	8:40
8.2	Checklist for Preventive Object Conservation in Historic Furnished Interior.....	8:44
8.3	Sample Agreement between Harpers Ferry Center, Department of Planning and Research and a Park.....	8:47

8.4	Annotated Guidelines for Preparing Historic Furnishings Report prepared by HFC, Department of Planning and Research.....	8:51
8.5	Determining the Cost of Furnishing Historic Interiors based on a HFC, Department of Planning and Research Document.....	8:53
8.6	Outline of Recommended Practices for Historical Furnished Interiors adapted From "Standards for Preservation & Guidelines for Preserving Historic Furnished Interiors" of the NPS Northeast Region's Guidelines.....	8:55

## Chapter 8: Using Museum Collections in Historic Furnished Structures

### Page

<b>A. Overview</b>	8:1
What information does this chapter cover?	8:1
What doesn't this chapter address?	8:1
What is a historic furnished interior?	8:2
What do historic furnishings include?	8:2
What types of historic furnishing installations are there?	8:3
<b>B. Finding Background Information to Furnish a Historic Structure</b>	8:4
What NPS documents contain information relevant to historic furnishings projects?	8:4
What other sources should I research?	8:6
Where do I go for help when planning to furnish a historic interior?	8:6
What services do I need in a historic furnishing curator?	8:6
What services does Harper Ferry Center Department of Planning and Research provide?	8:7
<b>Getting Started</b>	8:8
When does a historic furnishing project happen?	8:8
Why is research on historic structures useful?	8:8
Why establish a historic furnishings team?	8:9
Who is on the historic furnishings team and what does each member do?	8:9
Who writes the historic furnishings report.	8:12
<b>D. Planning Historic Furnishings Projects</b>	8:12
What is NPS policy on furnishing a historic interior?	8:12
What are some general guidelines to developing a furnished historic interior?	8:13
How do we determine what kind of historic furnishings are needed?	8:13
What initial planning actions does the park take?	8:15
What does the project curator once the initial planning is completed?	8:15
How are themes and goals developed?	8:16
Why does the park need a project agreement?	8:17
When does the park work with a contract furnishings curator to develop a historic furnishings report?	8:18
What is included in a historic furnishings plan?	8:18
How do I estimate costs to prepare a furnishings plan?	8:19
How do I estimate costs to implement a historic furnishings plan?	8:20
What sources can be used to fund historic furnishings projects?	8:20
<b>E. Producing and Installing Historic Furnishings</b>	8:21
How is the historic furnishings production process initiated?	8:21
What steps are involved in planning and production?	8:22
What steps are involved in historic furnishings installations?	8:23
Should I develop a punch list after the installation?	8:24
How do I correct minor factual errors after installation?	8:24
<b>F. Preservation and Maintenance of Historic Furnished Structures</b>	8:25
What object preservation issues must I consider when furnishing historic interiors?	8:25
What preservation challenges do furnished historic interiors present?	8:25
How can I protect museum collections from light damage?	8:26
How do I protect museum collections from environmental damage?	8:26
Can object placement help protect objects on exhibit?	8:26
What should I do about visitors and traffic flow?	8:27
What safety and security precautions should I take?	8:28



What do I need to know about structural preservation issues? .....	8:28
What happens immediately after the project is installed? .....	8:29
Should I monitor object condition? .....	8:29
What do I need to know about housekeeping? .....	8:29
What opening and closing procedures do I need to implement? .....	8:30
<b>G. Documenting Historic Furnishings on Exhibit .....</b>	<b>8:30</b>
Should objects in the furnished historic interior be cataloged? .....	8:30
When should I arrange for illustrations for artwork? ....	8:30
What documentation do I need for objects undergoing conservation treatment? .....	8:31
When should I borrow objects for installation? .....	8:31
When do I need to insure objects? .....	8:31
Do I need to annually inventory items on exhibit in the furnished historic interior? .....	8:31
What do I need to know about acquiring images? .....	8:31
What photographs do I need? .....	8:31
How do I handle requests to photograph the historic furnishings installation or the objects? .....	8:32
<b>H. Interpreting Furnished Historic Interiors .....</b>	<b>8:32</b>
Why are furnished historic interiors used to interpret park resources? .....	8:32
What is the Comprehensive Interpretative Plan? .....	8:32
What types of interpretation do historic furnished interiors provide? .....	8:33
What time periods are interpreted in the furnished historic interior? .....	8:33
What are some of the methods of interpreting historic furnishings? .....	8:34
How can the project curator assist with interpretation of the historic furnishings? .....	8:34
Who is involved in interpreting the historic furnishings installation? .....	8:34
How does the park answer inquiries from staff, visitors and the public? .....	8:34
<b>I. Evaluating Historic Furnishings .....</b>	<b>8:35</b>
How do I evaluate the historic furnishings installation? .....	8:35
What is preliminary evaluation? .....	8:35
What is planning and production evaluation? .....	8:36
What is post-production evaluation? .....	8:36
<b>J. Rehabilitating Historic Furnishings Installations .....</b>	<b>8:37</b>
What should I do when objects show signs of wear? .....	8:37
How do I update the historic furnishings installation? .....	8:37
<b>K. Selected Bibliography .....</b>	<b>8:37</b>
<b>L. List of Figures .....</b>	<b>8:39</b>







# Chapter 8: Using Museum Collections in Historic Furnished Structures

## A. Overview

### 1. *What information does this chapter cover?*

This chapter covers historic furnishings that are displayed in historic structure museums, historic house museums, historic structures, and rooms within museum settings. This chapter replaces the NPS *Museum Handbook*, Part III, Furnished Historic Structure Museums, January 1968.

The chapter only addresses museum collections themselves that are displayed in furnished historic structures. Please refer to Chapter 7, Using Museum Collections in Exhibits of this Handbook for detailed information on issues related to the exhibition of museum collections in areas such as visitor centers, galleries and exhibit halls.

The chapter assumes that the restoration or reconstruction of a historic furnished interior is the optimum way to convey the park's interpretive mission. NPS sites provide a unique opportunity for the public to see the 'real things' in the actual places where American history happened. Historic furnished structures provide the original context for visitors to link directly to individuals and events celebrated in the national park system.

*Follow the procedures outlined in this chapter when furnishing a historic interior, whether you do the work in-house, or use a contractor or Harpers Center staff.*

### 2. *What doesn't this chapter address?*

The chapter does not include information on exhibits in:

- traditional museum settings such as exhibit halls and galleries
- office art or display of museum collections in administrative offices
- visible storage
- wayside exhibits
- traveling exhibits

Also, the chapter doesn't address structural and interior issues such as:

- structural assessment and treatment
  - load bearing characteristics
  - safety codes
- interior and exterior treatments or configurations
  - period architectural features

- paint and wallpaper analysis
- handicapped access
- carrying capacity including tour routes
- adaptive use of historic structures

Refer to Director's Order # 28: Cultural Resource Management Guideline, Chapter 8, Historic and Prehistoric Structures for information on these topics.

3. *What is a historic furnished interior?*

*Historic furnishings are the combination of historic spaces, objects and themes. They evoke a powerful interpretive experience for visitors who can sense that 'history happened here'*

Planning a Historic Furnishings Report, Harpers Ferry Center

A historic furnished interior is an assemblage of furnishings arranged in a historic structure. The historic structure can include original furnishings with intact architectural features, or it may be a restored interior with some original furnishings; or it can be a recreated or reconstructed interior without original furnishings. Period rooms in a museum aren't considered historic furnished structures. See NPS 28, Cultural Resource Management Guideline, Chapter 8. A.1, for a definition of a historic structure.

The ultimate goal of any furnishings project is to create an authentic furnished historic exhibit for interpretation. Whether a domestic interior, machine shop, store, military barrack, or ship's wardroom, objects must be installed to ensure an accurate historical scene. Display site-associated furnishings in the original structure in which they were made or used. If appropriate, site-associated furnishings can be supplemented by period pieces or replicas. Furnish historic interiors with a maximum amount of accuracy and a minimum of conjecture. Refer to the guidelines at [www.nps.gov/hfc/products/furnish/furnish-plan.htm](http://www.nps.gov/hfc/products/furnish/furnish-plan.htm) and the *NPS Northeast Region's Guidelines for the Treatment of Historic Furnished Interiors* for additional information.

4. *What do historic furnishings include?*

Historic furnishings include the following:

- original objects and furnishings directly associated with the site, referred to as "original" objects
- objects and furnishings dating to the period, referred to as "period" objects
- floor coverings
- wall coverings
- window treatments
- reproduction objects and furnishings, including floor coverings, wall coverings, and window treatments

- accessory items used to represent the appearance of an area to a date or period of time specified by a site's interpretive plan.

*Historic furnishings on exhibit in furnished historic interiors are considered museum collections. This applies to original, period, and reproduction objects. They are all documented, preserved and used in accordance with procedures outlined in the NPS Museum Handbook, Parts I, II, and III.*

Historic furnishings may be directly associated with an individual or a group while at that site, or an event or activities that occurred at the site. This includes personal items that Frederick Douglass used at his Cedarhill home or that Eleanor Roosevelt used at Val-Kill. These are considered "original" to the site. Historic furnishings that are called "period pieces," date to the same era without having direct association with the specific people, events, or activities related to the structure itself. Always inform visitors as to which objects are original to the site, period pieces, and reproductions. Whether you have directly associated, period or reproduction pieces, furnished historic interiors present a management challenge. In addition to balancing the needs of preservation and use of museum collections, you need to balance the museum collection needs with those of the historic structure that houses the collection.

5. *What types of historic furnishing installations are there?*

There are different kinds of furnished historic structure installations. They include:

- Homes of prominent individuals such as presidents and other national leaders. Examples include homes of Abraham Lincoln Home, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Harry S. Truman, and Frederick Douglass.
- Homes of less well-known individuals such as Maggie Walker or Moore Cabin at Skagway NHS.
- Institutional living quarters such as military barracks, officer quarters, and barracks at Manzanar NHS, Fort Laramie NHS and Fort Davis NHS.
- Stores such as clothing, rug room and dry goods stores at Hubbell Trading Post NHS.
- Inns and taverns. These include Lemon House at Allegheny Portage NHS and Mount Washington Tavern at Fort Necessity NHS.
- Industrial-related sites such as the forge at Saugus NHS, Cast House at Hopewell Furnace NHS, machine shop at Edison NHS.
- Ships such as the USS *Cassin Young* and *Balclutha*.
- Period settings within exhibit areas such as the Civil War encampment at Gettysburg National Park.

Visitors can see these installations at the park or online in virtual exhibits on

## **B. Finding Background Information to Furnish a Historic Structure**

### **1. *What NPS documents contain information relevant to historic furnishings projects?***

The NPS documents noted in this section contain useful information for successfully completing a park historic furnishings project. Refer to *MH-III*, Chapter 7, Using Museum Collections in Exhibits for specific guidance on exhibit and conservation related issues. Before starting a historic furnishings project, become familiar with museum collections-related sections in the NPS policies and guidelines noted below

- *NPS Management Policies*, Chapter 5.3.5.5.5, Historic Furnishings:

When historic furnishings are present in their original arrangement in a historic structure, every effort will be made to preserve them as an entity. Such historic furnishings will not be moved or replaced unless required for their protection or repair or unless the structure is designated for another use in an approved planning document. The original arrangement of historic furnishings will be properly documented. A structure may be refurnished in whole or in part if:

- all changes after the proposed refurnishing period have been professionally evaluated, and their significance has been fully considered
- a planning process has demonstrated that refurnishing is essential to public understanding of the park's cultural associations; and
- sufficient evidence of the design and placement of the structure's furnishings exists to enable its accurate refurnishing without reliance on evidence from comparable structures.

Generalized representations of typical interiors will not be attempted except in exhibit contexts that make their representative nature obvious. Reproductions may be used in place of historic furnishings, but only when photographic evidence or prototypes exist to ensure the accurate recreation of historic pieces.

- NPS-28: Cultural Resource Management Guideline, Chapter 8. Historic and Prehistoric Structures discusses management, preservation, treatment and interpretation of historic and prehistoric structures, and furnished historic structures, and Chapter 9, Management of Museum Objects, covers the historic furnishings report, historic furnishings, and the relationship of objects to the historic structure, as well as standards for managing objects.
- Director's Order #6, 3.5 Interpretation and Education, notes that Harpers Ferry Center (HFC) will: "*Provide assistance with the development of interpretive media in.... historic furnishings ...*" and discusses the elements of interpretive planning.



- *Interpretation and Visitor Services Guideline* (formerly NPS 6), Chapter 5, Section 2, Exhibit Design, Production and Rehabilitation discusses the development or rehabilitation of exhibits.
- *Project Management Information System* (PMIS) is a Servicewide budget system used for project requests.

Park-specific documents:

- *General Management Plan* (GMP) outlines interpretive themes, proposes locations for informational and interpretive facilities, examines visitor needs and use trends, and sets the general direction for resource interpretation, preservation and visitor use. The GMP specifies the need, in broad terms, for a furnished historic structure.
- *Comprehensive Interpretive Plan* (CIP) identifies all interpretive themes and needs in the park and includes a long-range interpretive plan or strategy, the annual interpretive plan, and a park interpretive database that compiles various interpretive data.
- *Long Range Interpretive Prospectus* (LRIP) is part of the CIP that is developed for a specific project. It describes in detail what areas will be furnished, how they will be furnished, and how they will be interpreted.
- *Historic Resource Study* is the primary document used to identify and manage historic resources in a park. It is the basis for understanding the significance and interrelationships of historic resources. The Historic Resource Study provides a point of departure for development of interpretive plans and the framework within which additional research should be initiated. It documents sources of primary and secondary materials of potential value to the study.
- *Historic Structures Report* is the primary guide to treatment and use of a historic structure. It outlines information on the historic structure's evolution, current condition and causes of deterioration based on documentary research and physical examination. It presents and evaluates alternative uses and treatments, and compiles a record of treatments. It includes an architectural data section documenting changes to the historical fabric of the structure; and outlines the history and use, archeological investigations, and structural analysis of items such as paint and wallpaper.
- *Historic Furnishings Report* [HFR] is the primary guide to furnishing a historic interior. It outlines the plan for furnishing the interior and provides the basis for those plans. The HFR provides detailed information critical to furnishing and managing the structure. In particular, it provides background, history, occupancy, and use over time, and documents, where possible, previous furnishings. The HFR provides the interpretive objectives of the project, listing of recommended furnishings, sources, and a comprehensive installation plan. It includes how much documentation exists for the structure, and addresses how visitors will experience the site, and how the plan will be implemented. Guidelines on preparing a historic furnishings report

are found at [www.nps.gov/hfc/products/furnish/furnish-plan-hfr-guide.htm](http://www.nps.gov/hfc/products/furnish/furnish-plan-hfr-guide.htm).

- *Archeology Report* that documents objects recovered at the park site using archeological recovery methods.
- *Museum Catalog Record* that documents individual items or groups of items in the park's museum and archival collections, and is contained in the park's Automated National Catalog System database (ANCS+ or its successor).
- *Project Management Information System (PMIS) Project Statement*, the project statement in PMIS documents the work to be done, the funding request, funding received, and accomplishments.

2. *What other sources should I research?*

An authentically furnished historic interior tells a compelling story of its inhabitants. The people who lived and worked in, and who used this historic interior come alive when the real historical context is recreated. To do this, you need to systematically research general histories, in-depth historical studies, state, regional and local histories, county and city records such as tax and census returns, courthouse records, building and property records, architectural records, archeological excavation field notes and records, inventories, and museum and archival records.

Read dairies, journals, work logs, and biographies. Closely examine visual images such as portraits and room sketches. Historic photographs provide rich evidence for furnishing historic interiors accurately. Identify the paints, wallpapers, window and floor coverings and other materials used in the structures. Understand use patterns. Preserve the human element of the structure to tell the story. Whenever possible, do audio and video tape interviews of people who were directly associated with the structure, or who are descendents of, or connected to the original inhabitants.

3. *Where do I go for help when planning to furnish a historic interior?*

When initiating a new historic furnishings installation or exhibit or updating an existing one, consult with your regional curator, regional chief of interpretation, and other regional specialists, such as the historical architect, and NPS specialists in historic furnishings; research and object acquisition, including those at Harpers Ferry Center. You can gain valuable practical advice by talking to other NPS colleagues who have been involved in historic furnishings projects. Speak to curators, collections managers, registrars, historians and exhibit designers at local and regional historic house museums and historical societies. The American Association for State and Local History ([www.aaslh.org](http://www.aaslh.org)) and the National Trust for Historic Preservation ([www.nthp.org](http://www.nthp.org)) publications provide useful information on interpreting historic properties. Many of their publications are available online.

4. *What services do I need in a historic furnishings curator?*

The historic furnishings curator, also called the project curator, project manager or historic furnishings planner, ensures that the public sees an accurate picture of the people, activities and events that the park is interpreting. The historic furnishings curator acquires and installs original, period, and reproduction objects to recreate the documented interiors. These include furnishings, decorative arts, personal items, custom reproductions, wallpaper, carpeting and drapery. The historic furnishings curator participates in interpretive planning teams and proposes furnishings

alternatives to the park. He or she recommends sources for historical and reproduction objects, and provides useful advice and information about a broad range of historic furnishings related activities and services. This includes research, planning, acquisition, installation, and post-installation support.

The historic furnishings curator:

- documents interiors and furnishings for whole buildings or individual spaces in houses, shops, ships, military barracks, courtrooms, taverns, forts, stores, mills and other structures
- develops plans to acquire and install original, period, or reproduction furnishings
- coordinates the work of contract curators who prepare historic furnishings plans, if appropriate
- coordinates the installation or rehabilitation of historic furnished interiors
- coordinates the efforts of architects who prepare historic structures to receive furnishings
- coordinates the efforts of object conservators who clean, repair, and prepare historic furnishings for exhibit
- works with park curatorial staff to develop an object rotation plan
- recommends placement of furnishings to maximize preservation and enhance visitor flow
- trains park curatorial and interpretation staff on the use and interpretation of interiors
- provides advice about operating historic structure museums

5. *What services does Harpers Ferry Center, Department of Planning and Research provide?*

Harpers Ferry Center [HFC] Department of Research and Planning staff research and document the historical appearance of a wide range of structures in the national park system. Their work enables the park to present authentic furnished interiors that commemorate significant individuals and everyday people and events in the national park system. HFC historic furnishings staff provide useful advice and information about a broad range of historic furnishings related activities and services. Services include research, planning, acquisition, installation, and post-installation support.

There is extensive information on a wide range of historic furnishings topics, including how to produce a historic furnishings plan, and guidelines for preparing historic furnishings reports at <http://www.nps.gov/hfc/products/furnish/index.htm>.

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## C. Getting Started

### 1. *When does a historic furnishings project happen?*

A historic furnishings project typically occurs when the park identifies a need to interpret an individual or group, an era, event or activities using furnishings in a historic structure. Furnishings projects are triggered by:

- the creation of a new park
- new planning initiatives (GMPs, LRIPs, etc.)
- rehabilitation of existing structures
- new discoveries and new interpretations in research or original collections

The elements noted below are needed to proceed with a historic furnishings plan:

- significant park theme
- original structure
- collections original to the site and structure(s)

### 2. *Why is research on historic structures useful?*

Research yields background information vital to management decisions. It provides the history, context and detail needed to authentically furnish the interior of a historic structure. Research enables the park to interpret the structure and its interior. Most importantly, it provides documentation on the people who lived or worked there. Research provides specific information on the historic character and use of the structure at a particular time and over time; historic objects and their placement; materials, finishes, fixtures, features; construction techniques, additions, alterations, and spaces and spatial relationships. See B.2. for sources of information.

Research on historic structures is collected, analyzed and documented using the following steps:

#### Step 1: Identification, evaluation and registration

Historical areas of the national park system are listed in the National Register of Historic Places ([www.nps.gov/history/nr](http://www.nps.gov/history/nr)) when they are established by law or executive order. Individual structures or features within these areas that contribute to their historical significance must also be documented for National Register purposes. A *Historic Structures Report* is usually completed. It provides essential information needed to furnish the interior. Refer to NPS- 28, *Cultural Resource Management Guideline*, Chapter 8, Historic and Prehistoric Structures for information on what is required to identify, evaluate and register a historic structure in the National Register.

#### Step 2: Documentation and investigation

Historic structure research complements existing knowledge needed to make informed decisions. Research on thematic context, physical

documentation, temporal associations, developmental history, scientific value and material analysis is critical to managing the historic structure, and to furnishing it. Historic documents, drawings, photographs, and paintings yield information. Information is also culled from other reliable sources. The *Historic Structures Report* (HSR) is usually completed for significant historic structures. Refer to NPS-28, *Cultural Resource Management Guideline*, Chapter 8, Section 2.a. *Historic Structures Report* for information on what is included in this report.

3. *Why establish a historic furnishings team?*

A successful historic furnishings project is a team effort. It involves a broad range of expertise. Not all members are equally active at the same time. However, each team member's input is essential to ensuring a successful project. The entire team ensures that a plan is well developed and accurate. It ensures that the historic furnished interior satisfies the visitors' and the park's needs. The team is usually composed of park and center staff or contract staff.

4. *Who is on the historic furnishings team and what does each team member do?*

The team may include any of the following individuals noted below. Although responsibilities are assigned to each team member, the team synergy ensures that a comprehensive, in-depth historic furnishings report is developed, and an authentic and compelling interior furnished.

- *chief of interpretation* :
  - recommends the number of areas to be furnished
  - proposes the period of interpretation
  - suggests methods of interpretation including audio tours and interpretive labels
  - develops tour routes
  - recommends development of complementary programs and media, such as a web exhibit and *Teaching with Museum Collections* lesson unit plans, and posting of the objects in the Web Catalog at <http://www.museum.nps.gov>
  - functions as the furnishings project liaison with the park superintendent
- *historic furnishings curator* [also called the project curator, project manager or historic furnishings planner]
  - conducts the actual research leading to a historic furnishings report
  - meets with park staff to set goals on what will be accomplished
  - establishes, with park staff, the deadlines for the accomplishment of those goals
  - examines park museum and archival collections
  - identifies objects for their relevance to the project



- identifies, together with park curatorial staff, additional objects for rotation to enhance object preservation
- examines sources external to the park for information relevant to the project
- provides the park curator with descriptive and documentary material and digital images of objects to include in new or revised catalog records
- coordinates, together with park curatorial staff, the development of related web features
- *park curator* who
  - recommends appropriate collections for inclusion
  - accessions and catalogs the collections, and submits records for posting in the Web Catalog
  - provides pertinent information on selected objects
  - selects objects for exhibit and rotation in consultation with the conservator and historic furnishings curator
  - provides historic, contextual, preservation and other pertinent information on selected objects and how they relate to the interpretive themes of the furnished historic structure
  - documents the objects are on exhibit
  - monitors the condition of objects on exhibit
  - trains staff in housekeeping for historic furnished structures
  - conducts regular inventories of objects on exhibit
  - trains housekeeping staff on how to work in exhibit areas
- *conservator*
  - examines objects in the collections proposed for exhibit
  - determines whether those objects will withstand the stress and demands of exhibit
  - provides a schedule for rotating and “resting” sensitive objects off exhibit and develops a list of alternate objects for exhibit in consultation with the park curator
  - indicates what stabilization or remedial treatment they need in order to be put on exhibit

- arranges for conservation treatment either at HFC or through a contract conservator.
- *superintendent*
  - approves historic furnishings projects
- *chief of maintenance*
  - advises on structural, electrical, and related furnished historic structure preservation issues
  - has responsibility for ensuring exhibit areas are kept clean
  - works closely with the park curator and chief ranger to keep collections on exhibit preserved and protected
  - orients appropriate fire department officials to the layout and special needs of the site, and tours them through the structure
- *chief ranger*
  - ensures that intrusion and fire alarms and suppression systems are working and routinely tested
  - ensures that objects on exhibit in the furnished historic structure are included in the park's emergency preparedness plan
  - trains park staff to respond to alarms sound and emergencies
  - instructs staff in fire prevention, protection and the use of portable ABC rated fire extinguishers

Other specialists on the team may include:

- archivist
- educator
- historian
- historical architect
- media specialist
- registrar
- subject-matter experts

Descendents, family members and workers familiar with the site should meet with the team, as appropriate.

5. *Who writes the historic furnishings report?*

There are several options for the park to write the historic furnishings report. The park may choose to have:

- qualified park staff develop and implement the historic furnishings project;
- contract with a private historic furnishing specialist to write a historic furnishings report and develop a new historic furnishings exhibit or upgrade an existing exhibit; or
- enter into an agreement with NPS center staff to write the report.

Whatever option is selected, the park needs to meet conditions outlined in Figure 8.3, Sample Agreement between Harpers Ferry Center, Division of Historic Furnishings and a Park. This agreement outlines participant roles, work assignments, and products entailed in developing the historic furnishings exhibit.

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**D. Planning Historic Furnishings Projects**

1. *What is NPS policy on furnishing a historic interior?*

NPS Management Policies, Chapter 5, Section 5.3.5.5.5 provide professional historic furnishings guidelines. The policies state:

*When historic furnishings are present in their original arrangement in a historic structure, every effort will be made to preserve them as an entity. Such historic furnishings will not be moved or replaced unless required for their protection or repair, or unless the structure is designated for another use in an approved planning document. The original arrangement of historic furnishings will be properly documented. A structure may be refurnished in whole or in part if:*

- *All changes after the proposed refurnishing period have been professionally evaluated, and their significance has been fully considered;*
- *A planning process has demonstrated that refurnishing is essential to public understanding of the park's cultural associations; and*
- *Sufficient evidence of the design and placement of the structure's furnishings exists to enable its accurate refurnishing without reliance on evidence from comparable structures*

*Generalized representations of typical interiors will not be attempted except in exhibit contexts that make their representative nature obvious. Reproductions may be used in place of historic furnishings, but only when photographic evidence or prototypes exist to ensure the accurate re-creation of historic pieces.*

2. *What are some general guidelines to developing a furnished historic interior?*

The presentation of interiors and furnishings, and the surrounding landscape within a single timeline is a core preservation value.

When developing a furnished historic interior, always:

- Substantiate all furnishings and interiors with documentary and physical evidence.
- Preserve the original contents, such as objects and furnishings; features, finishes, and fabric of the interior.
- Accession original objects into the museum collections in accordance with the park's scope of collections statement.
- Take representative samples of features, finishes, fabrics and other furnishings, and add to the park's museum collection.
- Maintain the original distinguishing qualities or character of the interior. Don't remove or alter historic material or distinctive features.
- Ensure reversibility if historical material or distinctive features are altered. Thorough document any changes.
- Recognize, document, and respect changes that have taken place over time. They provide evidence of the history and development of the historic interior.
- Repair rather than replace deteriorated materials, features, finishes and furnishings. However, if the object is too deteriorated, rather than causing further damage, replace it in the exhibit and place what remains of the original in storage.
- Ensure that new and replacement items always match the old in design, color, texture, and where possible, original material.
- Substantiate and document replacement of missing features, finishes, materials, and furnishings.
- Use professionally accepted methods of preservation, conservation, preventive maintenance and object handling procedures for museum collections on exhibit in the historic furnished interior.
- Ensure furnishings and interiors complement each other in accordance with the historic furnishings plan.

3. *How do we determine what kind of historic furnishings are needed?*

Develop an interpretive statement that describes what story will be told and what the public will see on display. The statement outlines what period, people, activity or processes will be interpreted, and what historic furnishings are needed. All decisions related to the project flow from this statement. The steps noted below enable the historic furnishings curator to determine what kinds of historic furnishings are needed.

Step 1: Assess the park collection assessment and determine gaps  
The documented original contents of the interior to be furnished determine

what historic furnishings are needed. The interior should always be furnished with the minimum of conjecture. The interior space itself also determines what furnishings are needed. The park may choose to furnish the entire structure, such a presidential home or a single area such as a drugstore counter. The interior needs to be furnished in a way that allows visitors see to the furnished space under practical operating conditions. The project curator works closely with the park to establish project parameters.

In accordance with *NPS Management Policies* and NPS 28, *Cultural Resource Management Guideline*, if original furnishings survive, and if their interpretation is critical to an exhibit, then their use is appropriate. However, if original furnishings don't exist, furnishing a historic interior may present significant challenges and problems. In these instances, the decisions on whether to furnish must be judged on a case-by-case basis. The project curator determines the gaps in the park collections relative to the project.

A furnishing project generally combines the use of museum collections directly associated with the structure with the use of period pieces and reproductions. The higher the number of original items included in the interior, the greater its integrity. Period pieces such as couches, chairs, decorative arts, and archival and manuscript collections are used in historic furnished structures. The project curator will need to determine what objects need to be acquired or reproduced.

#### Step 2: Determine the appropriateness of objects for use

Whenever possible, use items that are original to the structure. To ensure longevity, identify similar objects that will be rotated regularly into the exhibit in order to 'rest' the objects. This rotation slows deterioration that occurs from extended exposure. Use documentary evidence to establish what objects to include. This includes historic photographs, paintings, drawings and documents, including inventories, memoirs, letters, and invoices.

When using period pieces, make sure that the pieces are appropriate to the period, location, and socio-economic standing of the people and place being furnished. The furnishings must be consistent with the interior and the historic structure. Wallpaper, window treatments and floor coverings are often reproductions because their originals have not survived, or have been placed in storage for preservation purposes. Accession and catalog representative samples of original wallpaper, window treatments and floor coverings into the park's museum collection. Natural history specimens are less commonly used, although items such as taxidermy mounts, geological samples, and seashells that were once fashionable may be used in furnished historic structures.

#### Step 3: Determine availability of objects

Make every effort to acquire objects that are original to the site. Period pieces may be acquired to supplement original collections to fully interpret the site. If the site doesn't already own the original furnishings, the project curator researches the acquisition and use of appropriate period pieces for inclusion in the historic interior. The park should make every effort to acquire original furnishings and period pieces by donation, purchase, or trade.

#### Step 4: Assess condition of available objects



Selected items should be in good condition to ensure the interpretive story is enhanced. Original or period items need to be stable enough to tolerate the exhibit environment. They may need conservation prior to exhibition. Develop a rotation schedule that allow original items to ‘rest,’ thereby extending the object’s preservation. Refer to Section F, Preservation and Maintenance, and Chapter 7. H. Exhibit Conservation, for additional information on preservation and conservation.

4. *What initial planning actions does the park take?*

The park determines whether a staff member, HFC historic furnishings curator, or a contractor will develop a historic furnishing plan. The project manager should:

- consult with the park team
- review the park’s interpretive plan and museum collections documents
- draft a project agreement for review by the park. Refer to Figure 8.3: Sample Agreement between Harpers Ferry Center, Department of Planning and Research and a Park
- develop a project interpretive statement
- coordinate the project among the park, regional office, Denver Service Center, and other HFC media units
- identify funding sources
- develop cost estimates
- consult with designated park staff on the project
- supervise the project through completion

The park works with project curator to develop and implement a historic furnishings plan. Whether the park chooses to do the work in-house, work with HFC staff or a contract curator, the steps outlined below should be followed.

5. *What does the project curator do once the initial planning is completed?*

The project curator:

- reviews site resource studies, planning documents, museum documents, and other pertinent documents for their suitability to the project
- visits the site and meets with the park team, including park interpretation and museum staff
- inspects historic furnishings that are part of the park’s collections
- examines collection documentation including accession and catalog records for museum and archival collections, and evaluates other resource materials at the park
- evaluates the integrity of the spaces to be furnished

- assesses the structure's condition, including environmental controls, fire protection, security or rehabilitation needs
- coordinates with team members at a park, a regional office, other media offices at HFC
- with the park staff, determines requirements for visitors with physical impairments
- measures and photographs rooms to be furnished
- photographs objects to be used
- consults with park staff on any other issues relevant to the project
- writes the historic furnishings report (refer to Figure 8.4, Annotated Guidelines for Preparing a Furnishings Report)
- coordinates the architect, engineer, and curatorial efforts to implement the plan
- implements the plan

6. *How are themes and goals developed?*

The park interpretive plan should guide the project's interpretive themes. These themes are addressed in the specific furnishings project. Other critical tasks are necessary to produce a well conceived furnished historic interior are described below. The project curator, in consultation with park staff:

- conducts research using primary and secondary sources related to
  - the construction history of the building
  - analysis of historical occupancy
  - history of furnishings
  - evidence of room use
  - evaluation of the interiors within the historic framework
  - analysis of changes over time
- identifies tentative themes and approaches based on the park's interpretive plan and enabling legislation
- recommends or confirms recommended period of interpretation
- evaluates objects in park collections for their suitability to the historic furnishings project
- suggests interpretive objectives

- suggests how to transmit themes and goals
- drafts a list of documentary references
- prepares a list of potential objects that need to be acquired for inclusion
- examines documents and collections in local community where appropriate
- reviews general research sources
- reviews visitors surveys and other pertinent visitor research
- identifies sources of historic photographs, graphics, or other potential illustrations from the park collections or other sources
- prepares a draft historic furnishings report for review by the park and other specialists
- issues final report

Refer to Chapter 3, Publications and Chapter 7, Using Museum Collections in Exhibits for additional information on developing themes and materials for the interpretation of historic furnished structures.

7. *Why does the park need a project agreement?*

The park needs a written project agreement that outlines the specifications of the project. The agreement ensures that all parties have a clear understanding of what needs to be done, products to be produced, and what outcomes are desired. A project agreement is an essential tool in the historic furnishings planning and production process. If HFC is doing the work, a historic furnishings specialist will write the project agreement. If the park is contracting with a private specialist, consult with HFC staff and use the sample in Figure 83 when you develop the agreement. The project agreement should include the following:

- background and scope of the project
- project team individual roles and responsibilities
- work plan
- schedule
- budget
- contact information, including phone numbers and e-mail addresses of all involved in the project

8. *When does the park work with a contract furnishings curator to develop a historic furnishings report?*

A park may choose to work with HFC staff, hire a contractor through HFC, or hire a contractor directly. A contract curator may prepare a historic furnishings report when:

- special expertise is needed
- the cost of using a contractor is less than using someone on staff
- HFC furnishings curator is not available to undertake the project

Whichever option is selected, the park should follow the tasks outlined below. The park must work with the park contracting and procurement officer to:

- prepare a scope of work statement
- prepare a requisition
- forward the requisition to the HFC acquisitions management office, if HFC is involved in the project
- evaluate responses of potential contract curators
- coordinate the contract to completion
- ensure that the contract curator performs the work outlined in the project agreement

The project curator prepares a historic furnishings report. Refer to Figure 8.4. Annotated Guidelines for Preparing Historic Furnishings Reports prepared by HFC, Department of Planning and Research for recommended guidelines in preparing a historic furnishings report. Photographs and artwork may be included in the report. The project curator usually contracts for artwork if applicable. The park, HFC staff, and appropriate specialists review the draft. Comments and issues are addressed. The superintendent approves the final report. The report is then distributed.

9. *What is included in a historic furnishings plan?*

The furnishings plan outlines what and where furnishings will be displayed, and how they will be displayed. The document guides the acquisition and installation of museum objects in the furnished historic interior. The historic furnishings report should include the following:

- interpretive objectives
- administrative information
- earlier planning documents
- operating plan
- historical information
- analysis of historic occupancy

- evidence of room use and original furnishings
- archeology reports, if appropriate
- recommended furnishings. This is the core of the plan. This section must include a complete inventory of the structure's proposed contents. The plan outlines the relation of the furnishings to the personalities, activities, interests or other ideas that will be communicated to the visitor.
- alternative recommended furnishings for rotation when selected original recommended furnishings are being rested
- preventive conservation strategy
- documentation of the furnishings, including accession and catalog information
- documentation of the structure
- location and placement of furnishings
- lighting and installation
- source of furnishings
- working drawings
- floor plans and/or elevations
- special installation, maintenance and protection recommendations
- appendixes
- bibliography
- budget
- schedule

Refer to Figure 8.4. Annotated Guidelines for Preparing Historic Furnishings Reports prepared by HFC, Department of Planning and Research and the HFC web site at [www.nps.gov/hfc/products/furnish/furnish-plan-hfr-guide.htm](http://www.nps.gov/hfc/products/furnish/furnish-plan-hfr-guide.htm).

10. *How do I estimate costs to prepare a historic furnishings plan?*

Costs vary depending on the time needed for research, the availability of research materials, the length of the furnishings report, and whether any specialists need to be hired to supplement the research, and if additional objects need to be acquired. If no preliminary planning has been done on a project (for example, a new park area study), some funding may be necessary to determine what resources are available. When these resources are known, a more accurate estimate of funding is possible. To provide an estimate of costs, the following questions should be answered:



- What is the availability of research materials?
- Has preliminary planning been done?
- Have objects been cataloged?
- Are objects original to the site available?
- Has the building intended for the exhibit has been rehabilitated?
- Does the structure have a suitable climate-control system and ultra-violet lighting controls ?
- Are fire detection, suppression and intrusion (security) systems in place and operable?

Factor in all aspects of planning and production when calculating costs.  
Cost elements of planning include:

- salaries and benefits
- travel
- photographs
- illustrations
- editing
- printing

11. *How do I estimate costs to implement a historic furnishings plan?*

The cost of producing a plan involves a number of variables and is complex to estimate. The park museum collections may not have all the furnishings needed to furnish the structure. The park may need to acquire additional museum objects. These objects must be identified, located and purchased. An object may have a low dollar value, but the cost of finding it may be high. Objects original to the site or with significant associational value are often highly priced. Period pieces may be expensive to acquire. Reproduction objects may be easy to locate, but the cost of acquiring them may be high. The cost of making an exact replica can be very high. Objects with an association to the person or event being interpreted may require conservation treatment. Conservation treatment costs are also high. Wall coverings, floor coverings, lighting and other furnishings needed to complete the space may be very costly. Contact HFC to obtain the most accurate, up-to-date estimate of the cost of planning and producing a historic furnishings setting.

12. *What sources can be used to fund historic furnishings projects?*

Line-item funding is a major source for new projects and for the major rehabilitation of existing projects. Congress appropriates line item funds in an annual budget. Rehabilitation funds are sometimes available through regional offices and the HFC. Typically, these pay for the cost of renovating an existing project. Entrance fee money (sometimes called “fee

money” for short) is a source of funding controlled by a park or a region. Cyclic maintenance funds can be used to rehabilitate areas worn from visitation or, for example, degraded from the exposure to light or from other agents of deterioration. Funding can also be found from donations or, increasingly, from grants. Parks have used the following fund sources for work in historic research and object acquisition:

- Annual Operating Funds or Park Base (Recurring)—Fund Type 01
  - Cultural Cyclic Maintenance—Fund Type 01
  - Donations—Fund Type 26
  - Emergency Relief and Storm Damage—Fund Type 04
  - Fee Program—No Year—Fund Type 04
  - Fee Demonstration Program—Fund Type 25
  - Regular Cyclic Maintenance—Fund Type 01
  - Line Item Construction—Fund Type 05
  - Planning—Fund Type 05
  - Congressional Add-Ons
- 

## **E. Producing and Installing Historic Furnishings**

### **1. *How is the historic furnishings production process initiated?***

Whether the park, HFC or a contractor is responsible for the project, the project manager:

- reads the approved historic furnishings report
- consults with the project curator and planner to clarify issues outlined in the report
- meets with park staff
- examines spaces to be furnished to ensure the spaces will be prepared to take objects
- examines paint, carpet, lighting, and wallpaper and other interior features
- examines the park collection to help determine conservation needs
- discusses staffing and security
- discusses barrier types and their placement
- develops a schedule

- coordinates all aspects of work with staff from park, region, HFC and Denver Service Center (DSC)

2. *What steps are involved in planning and production?*

The following steps, usually taken by the project curator, are essential to furnishing a historic structure:

- initial preparation and planning
  - review of historic furnishings report
  - consultation with the planner
  - identification of other specialists needed on the project
  - visit to the site
  - meeting with park staff
  - identification of themes in consultation with park staff
  - establishment of schedule and deadlines
  - cost estimate
  - coordination of all involved in the project, including the park, DSC, HFC, Region, and specialists
- evaluation of condition of furnished spaces
  - arrange for spaces to be prepared for installation, i.e., carpet, lighting, paint, wallpaper
  - establishment of barrier type and design  
identification of visitor flow
- evaluation of the park collection
  - work with park staff to identify collections
  - work with park curator to prepare park collection(s)
  - organization of objects by category and type (to facilitate buying)
  - development of a ‘want list’ of objects for installation
  - complete work planning for accessioning and cataloging new items (e.g., original, period and reproductions) into the collection
  - determine prototypes for objects to be replaced
  - location and acquisition of objects

- contract with known sources to acquire objects
- request donation, loan or purchase of object(s)
- request permission to copy objects, if necessary
- identify contracting officer’s technical representative (COTR) for replication work
- write scope of work statement for reproduction
- send procurement paperwork through system
- arrange for delivery of objects to the conservator; inspects and accepts/rejects objects on completion
- complete object documentation, including accession and cataloging as necessary
- work with conservator to establish conservation treatment(s) for object(s)
  - arrange for packing and shipping of objects to park
  - work with conservator and park curator to determine object rotation schedule
- work with maintenance and engineering staff to address
  - preservation requirements, including minimizing exposure to damaging UV, visible light, and humidity fluctuations
  - accessibility requirementsenergy efficiency
  - health and safety code considerations
  - visitor flow
  - safety requirements
  - emergency preparedness issues

3. *What steps are involved in historic furnishings installations?*

The ultimate goal of any furnishings project is the installation of objects to create an authentic furnished historic exhibit. Objects have to be installed carefully and securely to ensure an accurate historical scene. Good organization helps facilitate an installation. The project curator needs to take the steps noted below.

- arrange for painting, wallpaper hanging, and the laying of carpet or other wall, floor and window coverings in advance of the rest of an installation

- pack objects that are being shipped to the park according to their location in a furnished exhibit to minimize handling. Packs objects made of similar materials together to avoid potential damage, such as ceramic plates placed under cast iron skillets.
- select alternative objects or reproductions to be used to rotate and ‘rest’ objects on exhibit to ensure longevity
- post inventories of box contents inside and outside the box to ensure minimum handling
- unpack and examine objects
- work with the park curator to accession and catalog newly acquired objects and, as needed, prepare catalog records for public posting on the *Web Catalog*
- place objects in their proper locations within the historic structure
- retain packing materials until all objects are accounted for
- make sure staff is equipped to install objects
- install, together with a mount maker or conservator, fragile material on special mounts
- oversee installation of barriers and runners to help protect objects on exhibit
- ensure appropriate lighting of objects and spaces, including visible and ultra-violet filtering films or barriers on windows and light fixtures to minimize damage to objects
- work with park staff to develop complementary programs and media, including a virtual exhibit and house tour, and *Teaching with Museum Collections* lesson unit plan.

4. *Should I develop a “punch” list after the installation?*

Yes, definitely. You need to develop a punch list of any specifications that are outlined in the project agreement that have not been addressed. Provide the project curator, contractor or HFC with a copy of the list. Only sign off on the project agreement once these have been corrected to your satisfaction. Refer to Chapter 7, Section F, Producing and Installing Exhibits for additional information.

5. *How do I correct factual errors after installation?*

Document all the factual errors that occur in the interpretive label copy and signage. Similarly, document any problems in the actual installations. Notify the superintendent of these errors, and send a copy to the attention of the historic furnishings report [HFR] author and/or the HFC Department of Planning and Research for correction. Have these errors corrected within a specified time and require that revised label copy and signage are provided to the park. Include a copy of the memo in the report.



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## F. Preservation and Maintenance

### 1. *What object preservation issues must I consider when furnishing historic interiors?*

Historic furnished interiors demand the harmonious balance of the competing needs of visitor access, preservation of collections, interiors, and the structure itself. The display of collections in the open, for extended periods of time, and in uncontrolled conditions, present particular management challenges.

Typically fragile objects on exhibit in historic furnished structures are made of, or decorated with natural materials. These are cotton, wool, silk, linen, paper, bone, ivory, wood, paint and varnish. Historic furnishings made of these materials include wallpaper, window coverings, furniture, especially upholstered pieces, and carpeting. These are particularly sensitive to light and humidity fluctuations. Materials less subject to deterioration are ceramics, glass, and metals. However, these materials will also degrade if exposed to poor environmental conditions.

The project curator works with the park curator and a conservator to determine which objects should be replicated and which objects should be rotated off display to ensure longevity. If an object is too fragile to withstand extended exhibit in a historic furnished structure, it should be represented by a reproduction or a period piece. The original, fragile items should be placed in storage. Refer to Chapter 7, Section H, Exhibit Conservation and Section I, Preserving and Protecting Objects in the Exhibit Process for information on preserving and protecting collections on exhibit.

### 2. *What preservation challenges do furnished historic interiors present?*

Preventive conservation in historic interiors presents many challenges. Open furnished interiors, rather than closed exhibit cases, can mean that the object's environment can't be readily controlled. Also, by only focusing on the structure's preservation needs, you may cause the object irreversible damage. Make sure that the HVAC, lighting, and object placement support rather than diminish the object's preservation. Close monitoring, UV, visible light, and humidity control, and systems adjustments are required. Use 'low tech' period appropriate practices such as drawing curtains, closing shutters, and installing dust covers on furnishings to protect furnishings. Design visitor flow to keep objects out of reach. Incorporate elements of good housekeeping procedures. These steps will prolong the life of your collections on exhibit in the historic furnished interior. Use these and other historically appropriate practices as an interpretive tool to explain NPS efforts to preserve museum collections. You could also have samples made expressly available for people to handle, so that they don't feel the need to touch the objects on display.

Refer to procedures outlined in Chapter 7, Using Museum Collections in Exhibits, in particular, Figure 7.4. Exhibit Conservation Checklist. *MHI-I* has extensive guidance on all aspects of preservation and protection, including Chapter 4. Museum Collections Environment; Chapter 5. Biological Infestations; Chapter 9, Museum Collections Security and Fire Protection; Chapter 10, Museum Housekeeping. Also refer to *MHI-I*, Appendix J, Curatorial Care of Paper Objects, Appendix K, Curatorial Care of Textile Objects; Appendix L, Curatorial Care of Paintings, Appendix N, Curatorial Care of Wooden Objects; Appendix Q, Curatorial Care of Metal Objects; Appendix P, Curatorial Care of Ceramic, Glass, and Stone Objects;

and Appendix R, Curatorial Care of Photographic Collections.

Refer to Chapter 6, Special Uses of Museum Collections for guidance related to protecting the interior during filming, still photography or other special uses. Make sure that a treated or conserved item, when it is returned to exhibit, is compatible with other objects on exhibit.

3. *How do I protect museum collections from light damage?*

Develop and implement a housekeeping plan that will protect collections on exhibit in historic furnished interiors. To protect and preserve objects on exhibit, be sure to:

- Place objects, particularly sensitive materials, such as lithographs, away from direct and indirect sunlight.
- Install period appropriate shutters, blinds, or curtains on windows.
- Keep lighting levels to a minimum. Draw blinds, curtains, and shutters to protect against light damage. A visitor's vision will adjust to lower light levels. Reduced light also keeps the spaces cool if there is no air conditioning, and helps to lower air conditioning electrical bills.
- Install UV blinds or filtering films on windows.
- Install and maintain UV absorbent sleeves on fluorescent lights.
- Keep objects away from heat sources, such as windows, spotlights, lamps radiators, and air vents.
- Turn lights off when rooms aren't in use.

4. *How do I protect museum collections from environmental damage?*

To minimize the adverse impact of relative humidity and temperature, and minimize pest infestations, you should:

- Develop a housekeeping plan that includes a rigorous IPM component.
- Monitor relative humidity and temperature; refer to Chapter 7, Section H, Conservation.
- Maintain a stable environment. Avoid peaks and valleys in relative humidity and temperature when the structure is opened and closed to visitors.
- Ensure adequate ventilation to avoid mold growth.
- Keep objects away from air vents, radiators, pipes and outdoor windows
- Do not use fresh flowers or live plants in the interiors.
- Install and monitor pest traps throughout the interior.

5. *Can object placement help protect objects on exhibit?*

Yes. Object placement can make an enormous difference to object preservation and security. Always keep objects out of reach. The challenge is securing an artifact without noticeably compromising historical accuracy.

For example, modern art hanging equipment can be used to hang paintings while hidden behind the painting. A period picture rope can be attached to the painting support. You can:

- Relocate objects as necessary to keep them completely out of the visitor's reach and pathway.
- Locate furniture, such as a bench, in front of paintings to provide an additional barrier.
- Place vulnerable, fragile, and light-sensitive objects in darker areas of the structure.
- Locate valuable, small or fragile objects, especially firearms, well behind visitor barriers or in appropriate cabinets. Use additional security methods (i.e., individual alarms, monofilament line, spot-check inventories) when appropriate. See MH-I, Chapter 9 and Appendix G for more information.
- Monitor wear and tear on walls, runners, and carpets, using modern (replaceable) reproductions where possible.
- Move furnishings as little as possible; always have 2 people move an item.
- Use carpet runners to protect original carpeting and floors.
- Use thick carpet paper under carpets and underlays to absorb moisture.
- Use padding (underlays) under carpets to protect against abrasion.
- Rest heavy items on caster cups to protect floors and rugs.
- Sit objects on soft fabric or chamois mats to prevent abrasion of surfaces, such as tables.
- Protect furnishing with appropriate period dust or slipcovers.
- Place fragile and valuable items in storage and replace with reproductions, similar sturdier items, or establish a rotating schedule to keep the items on exhibit for only short periods.

6. *What should I do about visitors and traffic flow?*

You should:

- Work closely with interpreters to have them explain to visitors that they, the visitors, play an important role in preserving museum collections by not handling or touching the objects on display. Interpreters should also inform visitors about damaging effects of light and heat, and the efforts that NPS makes to minimize these in the historic furnished structure.
- Have an adequate number of staff present when visitors are present.
- Place items out of visitors reach to avoid handling, wear and tear.

- Protect historic floors and floor coverings by using runners to control visitor foot traffic.
- Provide slip-resistant shoe covers or booties to visitors to avoid damage from high heels and other damaging footwear.
- Avoid hanging paintings and placing objects in confined areas such as staircases to minimize accidental damage. Keep runners and carpets clean to prevent abrasion damage to floors and covering from grit and dirt.
- Place a doormat, boot scrapers, and metal grids at the entrance to eliminate abrasive gravel and dirt before visitors enter the structure.
- Have a receptacle for umbrellas, bags and other items to minimize accidental damage.

7. *What safety and security precautions should I take?*

You should:

- Review and update Opening/Closing procedures, key control and fire prevention on a regular basis and train staff to be security conscious.
- Keep keys out of locks, control access to rooms, closets, cabinets and other unused spaces.
- Use stanchions and ropes where possible.
- Never use real candles or light a real fire in a furnished historic structure. Use electric reproduction 'candles' and burning coals. For more information see link: < <http://www.elcanco.com/> >.
- Use visually pleasing and period appropriate barriers to protect objects where appropriate.
- Use carpet runners to keep visitors on a directed path through the interior.
- Always provide accompanied guided tours of the interior or structure.
- Install individual alarms for vulnerable objects.
- Consider installation of recorded closed circuit television (CCTV) systems to enhance security of furnished historic structures.

8. *What do I need to know about structural preservation issues?*

As museum curator you're responsible for knowing about the museum collections. However, you should also have an understanding of the complexities of structural preservation issues. They have an impact not only on the historic structure and its interiors, but also on the museum collections they contain. Whenever possible, coordinate with architects and engineers in the regional office and DSC on the structural components, systems and architectural elements that impact the historic furnishings.

- Heating, ventilation, and air condition [HVAC]

- Lighting
- Security
- Accessibility
- Barriers

Manage historic structures housing museums collections in accordance with curatorial standards while meeting structural preservation needs. The needs of the collections should not compromise the structure itself, and the needs of the structure should not compromise the collections.

9. *What happens immediately after the project is installed?*

When all objects have been installed, the project curator:

- identifies unfinished tasks or problem areas for inclusion on a listing often referred to as a “punch list.”
- work with the contractor or HFC, Department of Planning and Research staff to ensure the punch list is compiled and problems are corrected before the park signs off on the contract.
- takes the park curatorial and interpretive staff through the completed exhibit
- provides a rationale of the treatment and interpretation presented by the furnished historic interior
- points out the significance of the new acquisitions
- explains the nuances and historical authenticity of the installation

This includes the display of a desk that has been furnished as untidy, if photographic evidence supports an untidy desk in historical use. Similarly, the placement of items such as military equipment makes sense when a project curator explains actual military usage.

10. *Should I monitor object condition?*

Yes. Monitor the condition of objects on display in the historic furnished structure with high resolution photographs (images) of each object on display, and detailed interior photographs. Develop and follow a written inventory and checklist and annotate conditions on a regular basis. Establish a monitoring survey routine, such as a daily and weekly survey. Check objects, their condition, and whether any damage has occurred by closely examining the objects, and by comparing to object photographs. If remedial action is necessary, discuss with a conservator and report the need to a supervisor. A survey should include recordings and evaluation of hygrothermograph or other data collector recordings.

11. *What do I need to know about housekeeping?*

Work with maintenance staff to develop and implement a housekeeping plan appropriate to the historic furnished interior or structure. Refer to *MH-I*, Chapter 5, Biological Infestations for information on IPM plans and Chapter 13, Museum Housekeeping. Develop a checklist of housekeeping tasks that will take place on a daily, monthly, and quarterly basis. Set up a



housekeeping schedule in accordance with the guidelines outlined in *MHI*, Chapter 13, Museum Housekeeping. Consult with a professional conservator as you develop the plan.

Your housekeeping plan addresses environmental controls, dusting, pest monitoring. Include frequency of tasks, supplies and equipment, and vendor sources to be used or not used, and techniques of housekeeping. Conservators trained in the care of historical objects can prescribe methods of cleaning. Arrange to rotate fragile objects, such as textiles, seasonally to help ensure their long-term preservation. Parks should include a strategy to rotate objects on exhibit in the furnished historic interior. If an object is rare or fragile, keep it in storage, and use a reproduction or period piece in the furnished interior instead. If a scholar wants to see an original object, he or she can arrange with a site curator to examine it.

***Regular and thorough housekeeping and routine maintenance is your best preventive conservation strategy.***

12. *What opening and closing procedures do I need to implement?*

To ensure security, implement procedures outlined in *Museum Handbook*, Part I, Appendix G, Figure G.3, Sample Furnished Historic Structure Opening and Closing Procedures.

#### **G. Documenting Historic Furnishings on Exhibit**

All objects on exhibit in the furnished historic interior must be documented. This includes accessioning and cataloging, and gathering information from primary sources such as documents, photographs, oral history transcriptions, or other material evidence. Some of these primary documents may themselves be on exhibit. Secondary documentation includes books, periodicals and unpublished accounts that provide information on the furnishings and the individual, structure, and period of the site. The project curator uses primary/secondary sources, and other relevant materials to prepare a historic furnishings report. The park and regional office review the report. Historic structures should be documented in conformance with *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Historic Furnished Interiors*. See <http://crm.cr.nps.gov/archive/24-07/24-07-10.pdf>. and < <http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/standguide/>>.

Original documentation and research information allows you to make informed management decisions about the collections and the interior. These data enable you to provide appropriate care once the interior has been furnished.

1. *Should objects in the furnished historic interior be cataloged?*

Yes. Objects on exhibit in a furnished historic structure must be accessioned and cataloged in accordance with procedures outlined in *MHI*, Chapter 2, Accessioning and Chapter 3, Cataloging. For additional information on documenting objects on exhibit, refer to Chapter 7, Section M, Documenting Collections on Exhibit. As appropriate, the objects should be posted to the *Web Catalog* at <http://www.museum.nps.gov> to complement the exhibit.

2. *When should I arrange for illustrations for artwork?*

The park may need illustrations for a historic furnishing report or display in the furnished historic interior. The project curator can contract directly with an illustrator to produce prospective drawings or work with IHFC staff.

Samples of drawings may be requested from the HFC, Department of Planning and Research. These drawings should be included in the report.

3. *What documentation do I need for objects undergoing conservation treatment?*

File copies of object treatment requests and reports, and other documentation for objects receiving conservation treatment in the accession folder. The conservator, whether a contractor, center or HFC staff, must provide the park with object treatment report and copies of all documentation and photographs. Include this requirement in the project agreement. Direct conservation treatment questions to the HFC Department of Artifact Conservation manager.
4. *When should I borrow objects for installation?*

The park must make every effort to use and acquire park museum collections for historic furnished structures. However, on *very rare* occasions, a park may need to borrow objects for an installation of a furnished historic structure. **Note:** A park should consider borrowing only if an on object is absolutely critical to a furnishings exhibit. For detailed information on NPS incoming loan procedures, refer to *MH-II*, Chapter 2, Accessioning. The park should make an effort to permanently acquire such material.
5. *When do I need to insure objects?*

The park may be required to insure borrowed objects. Refer to *MH-II*, Chapter 4, Section VII, Purchasing Insurance for Borrowed Objects for detailed information on acquiring insurance.
6. *Do I need to annually inventory items on exhibit in the furnished historic interior?*

Yes. You need to inventory museum collections on exhibit in the furnished historic interior in accordance with guidelines in *MHIII*, Chapter 4, Inventory and Other Special Instructions.
7. *What do I need to know about acquiring images?*

Paintings, photographs, drawings and documents are often used in furnished historic interiors. Refer to Chapter 4, Two Dimensional Reproductions for information on how to obtain copies of images. For information on copyright, privacy and publicity issues, refer to Chapter 2, Legal Issues. These chapters provide detailed guidance on how to obtain written permission and rights to use images in an exhibit. The park can expect to pay a fee for the use of an image. Refer to Chapter 1, Sections D and E for information on dealing with restricted or sensitive materials. For additional information, contact the regional curator, Museum Management Program or the HFC, Department of Knowledge Archives unit.
8. *What photographs do I need?*

You should have high quality photographs and/or high resolution digital images of all objects, including digital and film-based images that go on exhibit in a furnished historic interior. Once the furnished historic structure is installed, arrange for professional photographs of the installation. These photographs serve several purposes. Photographs provide an object and room inventory, refer to Chapter 7, Section M, Documenting Objects on Exhibit. They provide documentation and accountability for collections security as well as baseline information that will assist the park curator in monitoring object condition. Historic furnishings tend to be dynamic. Over a period of time, they can be moved, changed, rearranged, removed and added back to the historic structure. Installation photography documents how the exhibit should look in the event items are inadvertently moved after the exhibit is installed.

Use the digital images to develop a virtual web exhibit and tour of the

furnished interior and the structure. They can be multi-purposed into brochures and catalogs, and used to publicize the exhibition. The images should augment the catalog record in ANCS+.

9. *How do I handle public requests to photograph the historic furnishings installation or the objects?*

Many public and private museums permit the photography of objects on exhibit. Some museums prohibit any photography, and others prohibit flash photography for several reasons. Excessive exposure to flash light may threaten sensitive objects. The taking of photographs with flash can be distracting to visitors. In the past, flash bulbs occasionally exploded, posing a risk to objects. Today, most flash units are built into cameras, so the threat of explosion is unlikely. Some museums seek to control access to images of their collections by prohibiting photography or only allowing it by special permit.

A park should decide whether to allow photography in exhibit areas and if so, under what conditions, and may limit flash photography. Refer to Chapter 6, Section D. Filming and Photography in Spaces Housing Museum Collections for additional information.

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## **H. Interpreting Furnished Historic Interiors**

1. *Why are furnished historic interiors used to interpret park resources?*

Historic furnished interiors evoke a powerful interpretive experience for visitors who sense that "history actually happened here." Historic furnishings allow parks to provide authentic interiors that commemorate the men and women, major events, and daily life that are celebrated in the national park system. They provide a direct link to an individual, event or period. Historic furnishings are situated in historic structures where significant events took place. They help recapture past eras and create moods using original and reproduction furnishings. Unlike a traditional museum exhibit in a gallery or visitor center, the furnished interior provides the original context where a particular person or group of people lived or worked, or where the event or process took place. Furnishings present an intimate look at the homes, places of work, belongings, and lives of presidents, pioneers, immigrants, artists and authors. On entering historic furnished spaces, visitors become witnesses to history. Furnished historic interiors make history real and immediate.

*Define the goal or theme and sub-themes of the furnishings project at the project outset. This will ensure that the park achieves its stated interpretation goals.*

2. *What is the Comprehensive Interpretative Plan?*

A park develops a Comprehensive Interpretive Plan (CIP) to outline its interpretive goals and how it will achieve them. The park's CIP describes the role of historic furnishings to the site. Furnishings allow the park to more fully interpret persons, events, and lifestyles. Individual historical objects in parks may represent prime examples of American decorative arts. However, they are in the furnished historic structure exhibit to tell a story about the persons and events that are being celebrated at the park. The furnished interior is intended to allow the visitor to feel as though they are stepping into history. The chief of interpretation should focus training for staff and volunteers on how furnishings reflect a park's goals as described in its CIP.

3. *What types of interpretation do historic furnished interiors provide?*

Historic furnished interiors can:

- Preserve objects directly associated with the place, event or individual being commemorated. Such objects are considered ‘original to the site.’ The objects are preserved in their original setting. Examples include the home of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Hubbell Trading Post, and the machine shop at Edison NHS.
- Recreate the scenes of specific historic events. Examples include Independence Hall at Independence NHP, the McLean House at Appomattox Courthouse NHS, and the bedroom in the House Where Lincoln Died at Ford’s Theatre NHS.
- Create period settings for objects original to the site. An example includes the Russian Bishop’s House at Sitka NHS.
- Create period settings to enhance interpretation. Examples include the clothing store at Harpers Ferry NHP and the commanding officers quarters at Fort Larned NHS or the Cast House at Hopewell Furnace NHS.
- Create period settings for adaptive use using reproduction objects exclusively. Examples include a room at Lemon House, Allegheny Portage NHS

The furnishings in a historic interior create an immediate context. The objects and their setting should be used to expand the visitor’s understanding and appreciation of the time and society in which they were created and used. Many objects actually belonged to and were used by individuals that the site is celebrating. The objects make a powerful connection to those individuals and their times. The interpreter can enliven the visit by weaving engaging information about the people, events and their belongings into the tour. They can ask relatively simple questions, such as “have you any idea what this was used for?” or “how was this item made?” These questions engage the visitor and focus their attention of the historic objects they are seeing. They can use the objects to tell the visitor about family life, social activities, food preparation and preservation, and customs of the period. Information about decorative arts, furniture and art styles, and other materials can be made fascinating to visitors.

A binder with expanded catalog cards and photographs can be extremely useful to interpreters. Well-designed audio tours accommodate extensive information that is user-activated.

4. *What time period is interpreted in the furnished historic interior?*

Furnishings interpret a particular point or points in time. A site can interpret a particular story, individual, or era. It can also interpret several decades or centuries of occupation within a single structure. Historic furnishings can tell the story of adaptive use over generations. In addition to interpreting specific individuals, events or periods, historic furnishings can be used to explain the process of interpretation itself.



5. *What are some of the methods of interpreting historic furnishings?*

To enhance the visitor experience and provide a learning opportunity, the historic furnished interior needs interpretation. There are several different methods of interpretation, and one or more may be used at a site. They include a:

- guided tour conducted by a trained interpreter
- predefined, self-guided tour using an audio guide
- self-guided tour through the structure with written interpretive label copy placed at selected points throughout the structure. The reading of labels is optional.

For additional information on interpretation, refer to DO #6, Interpretation and Education, documents outlined in Section B.2. of this chapter, and Chapter 7, Using Museum Collections in Exhibits.

6. *How can the project curator assist with interpretation of the historic furnishings?*

Once all objects are installed, the project curator should walk the site interpretive staff through the completed exhibit. The guided tour includes an explanation of the furnishings, new acquisitions, and how they relate to the installation. This preliminary staff tour must include the special preservation, security and fire prevention needs of the new furnishings exhibit. The interpretive staff will also need the “who, what, where, when and how” to find out additional information on the collections in order to improve their tours and to answer visitors questions. The project curator should explain why certain furnishings have been included, and why they have been arranged in a certain way. For example, that a desk has been furnished to appear untidy, since photographic evidence showed that desk was untidy in its original, historical use. Similarly, the rationale for the placement of military equipment might become clearer to interpreters when a furnishings curator explains contemporary military usage. The project curator provides binders containing hardcopy information, photographs, and other research materials related to the HFR for use by interpretive staff.

7. *Who is involved in interpreting the historic furnishings installation?*

A park is responsible for maintaining a furnished historic structure exhibit and for interpreting it to its visitors. It fulfills these tasks through its staff and volunteers. Depending on the size of a park, the following offices play a key role in the preservation and interpretation of historic furnishings: curation, security, maintenance and interpretation. Park chiefs of security, maintenance, cultural resources and interpretation must coordinate their responsibilities in these areas and corresponding staff and volunteers must do the same.

8. *How does the park answer inquiries from staff, visitors and the public?*

The park receives a complete research file from the project curator covering the entire project. This includes photographs, interviews and other materials. This file is a resource for answering questions. Make copies of the information on each artifact to place in individual catalog or accession folders. Develop a reference file of furnishings that contain photographs and well-documented catalog information for easy retrieval and use by park interpreters.



## I. Evaluating Historic Furnishings

### 1. *How do I evaluate the historic furnishings installation?*

As applied to a furnished historic structure exhibit, you may evaluate the success of the exhibit against several standards. These are organized into the following time segments;

- preliminary
- planning and production
- post-production

### 2. *What is preliminary evaluation?*

Preliminary evaluation occurs during general management planning when planners decide whether the use of a furnished historic structure is an interpretive option. Their decision must be weighed against the standard set by Management Policies for the National Park Service, quoted here in its entirety:

*When the historic furnishings of a structure are present in their original arrangement in a historic structure, every effort will be made to preserve them as an entity. Such historic furnishings will not be moved or replaced unless required for their protection or repair, or unless the structure is designated for another use in an approved planning document. The original arrangement of historic furnishings will be properly documented. A structure may be refurnished in whole or in part if*

- ① *All changes after the proposed refurnishing period have been professionally evaluated, and their significance has been fully considered*
- ① *A planning process has demonstrated that refurnishing is essential to public understanding of the park's cultural associations; and*
- *Sufficient evidence of the design and placement of the structure's furnishings exists to enable its accurate refurnishing without reliance on evidence from comparable structures.*

NPS Management Policies, Chapter 5.3.5.5.5., Historic Furnishings, 2006

Whether a site uses historic furnishings must be judged on the criteria cited above. The direct relation of furnishings to a primary park theme should be apparent to the members of the general management planning team. A formal value analysis provides the best way of deciding whether historic furnishings is the best way of interpreting history to the public. Such an analysis should be done even if the potential budget for historic furnishings is less than \$500,000, the threshold at which formal value analysis must occur. In accordance with the NPS Value Analysis Manual, value analysis is "the systematic application of recognized techniques by multi-disciplined teams who identify the function of a product or service, establish a worth for that function, and provide alternate ways to accomplish the necessary function reliably, and at the overall lowest cost, through creative

techniques.” In order to determine whether sufficient evidence exists to furnish with minimal conjecture, the historic furnishings curator evaluates the quality of resources; documents, photographs and collections, in consultation with park staff.

3. *What is planning and production evaluation?*

Evaluation of the historic furnishings process during the planning and production stages comes from two different perspectives: timeliness and accuracy. Timeliness can be measured against a formal performance agreement negotiated in advance of any planning or production. Whether a project is “on time” can be judged by whether the element agreed to has been completed or an extension of a deadline has been negotiated. A park superintendent or the appropriate HFC staff must judge the accuracy of the work being done.

4. *What is post-production evaluation?*

A post-production evaluation of a furnished historic structure project can be accomplished from three perspectives: efficiency, effectiveness and durability.

- *Efficiency* refers to whether the project has been completed according to a project agreement. The HFC, Department of Planning and Research agreed to plan and produce an accurate furnished historic exhibit according to a set schedule. Whether it did so is a measure of the efficiency of planning and production
- *Effectiveness* refers to how successful the exhibit is as an interpretive media. It is a measure of Management Policies, the extent to which historic furnishings are the best way of interpreting a history to the public. Effectiveness is more difficult to measure than efficiency. The park should do a formal visitor analysis to determine effectiveness. The park should contact the regional curator, HFC, Department of Planning and Research or the NPS Cooperative Park Studies Unit (CPSU) at the University of Idaho about doing a formal evaluation. Specialists at the CPSU can develop and administer a survey of the effectiveness of historic furnishings. The evaluation should be consistent with the Servicewide Interpretation and Education Evaluation Strategy (2006). The survey can point out strengths and potential weaknesses of the furnished structure exhibit. Weaknesses can be identified, examined, worked on, and corrected.
- *Durability* or how well objects withstand exhibition. The parts of the furnished historic exhibit that receive the most wear are floors, and walls and woodwork that are within visitor reach. These areas should be furnished with reproductions and protected with barriers. A furnishings project should include sufficient funding for buying extra carpeting and wallpaper to replace carpeting and wallpaper lost to wear by visitors or damaged by maintenance activities. Give interpreters instruction on how to minimize visitor impacts, including handling and leaning against structural elements such as walls.

Objects made of organic materials are particularly sensitive to adverse environmental conditions. The furnishings plan should provide rotation plan for sensitive objects, minimize the effects of deterioration and provide reproduction items for the installation. A major source of potential damage is light, so every effort must be made to keep organic materials away from light sources. Keep humidity stable.

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## J. Rehabilitating Historic Furnishings Installations

1. *What should I do when objects show signs of wear?*

Rehabilitating a historic furnished exhibit can occur when objects are worn, torn or faded, or when new evidence surfaces to support exhibit rehabilitation. For deteriorated objects, a park should contact the HFC, Department of Planning and Research to help determine what might be done to replace deteriorated objects with reproductions. For original objects that have deteriorated, obtain the services of a conservator, or contact the associate manager for Historic Furnishings who can confer with the associate manager for Conservation on how to proceed.

2. *How do I update the historic furnishings installation?*

A well-documented historic furnishings report should need not to be revised. Good documentation should support a plan in perpetuity. Occasionally, though, a site will find new evidence on original furnishings or new research may uncover errors in the previous HFR. The evidence may be in the form of documents, photographs or original objects. A park may have the opportunity to acquire an object having primary association to its collections. When any of these situations occur, a park can contact the associate manager for Historic Furnishings at Harpers Ferry Center. The new evidence may warrant a revision or an amendment to a furnishing plan, or it may even warrant an entirely new historic furnishings report.

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## **L. List of Figures**

Figure 8.1. Checklist for Exhibit Museum Collections in a Furnished Historic Interior

Figure 8.2. Checklist for Preventive Object Conservation in a Furnished Historic Interior

Figure 8.3. Sample Agreement between Harpers Ferry Center, Department of Planning and Research and a Park

Figure 8.4. Annotated Guidelines for Preparing Historic Furnishings Reports prepared by HFC, Department of Planning and Research

Figure 8.5. Determining the Cost of Furnishing Historic Interiors Based on a HFC, Department of Planning and Research Document

Figure 8.6 Outline of Recommended Practices for Historical Furnished Interiors Adapted from “Standards for Preservation & Guidelines for Preserving Historic Furnished Interiors” of the NPS Northeast Region’s Guidelines



**Figure 8.1: Checklist for Exhibiting Museum Collections in a Furnished Historic Interior**

Activity	Action and Date
Initial Planning	
Statement of Purpose	
Period[s] identified	
Individual or group identified	
Event[s] identified	
Process[es] identified	
Develop schedule	
Develop budget	
Objects	
Review accession and catalog folders	
List potential objects for inclusion	
Identify objects for display	
Ensure selected objects are cataloged	
Obtain object record photographs	
Provide detailed object condition descriptions	
Identify sensitive items	
Identify items needed on loan	
Complete loan agreements	
Obtain insurance as needed	
Identify alternate items for exhibit rotation	
Reproduction Allow enough time and resources to safely replicate exhibit objects. Arrange for reproduction of 3-D objects such as furnishings Arrange for copying of 2-D materials such as	

photographs	
Documentation	
Create a folder to house documents such as:	
Room inventory	
Installation photographs	
Listing of objects	
Rights Acquisition	
Check accession or catalog folder to see if NPS has rights to images, photographs and artwork	
Verify transfer of copyright on accession [gift] form(s)	
Include statement on incoming loan agreement granting NPS right to exhibit item	
Obtain rights to use non-NPS images and illustrations	
Obtain written permission and file in exhibit folder	
Conservation Treatment  Determine conservation and preservation needs in consultation with a conservator  Identify objects for rotation  Obtain the following: Object Condition Report Object Examination Report Object Treatment Proposal Object Treatment Report  Incorporate condition and treatment information in ANCS+	
Research	
Obtain background information	
Historic Furnishings Report	
Prepare plan	
Review plan and incorporate edits	

Review plan and ensure conservation needs are addressed for collections that will go on exhibit.	
Work with exhibit curator to ensure concerns are addressed	
Graphics	
Illustrations	
Maps	
Multi-media	
Fabrication	
Electrical fixtures	
Fabric/textiles	
Photographs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- black and white</li> <li>- sepia</li> <li>- color</li> </ul>	
Framing and matting	
<p>Installation</p> <p>Protect objects from excessive UV exposure</p> <p>Keep objects away from air vents, ducts etc.</p> <p>Cover windows with UV blinds, curtains or other appropriate media to block UV rays</p> <p>Work with preparator and conservator to install the furnishings</p>	
<p>Accession and catalog new acquisitions to the collection.</p> <p>Change object status and location in ANCS+</p>	
Develop MHP and IPM monitoring schedule	
Prepare punch list of problems to be corrected	
Correct problems	
Maintenance	
Obtain a maintenance manual	
Develop maintenance schedule	

Ensure access for cleaning, lighting, object rotation and emergencies	
Implement housekeeping and monitoring schedule	
Public Outreach	
Provide park interpretive and museum staff with installation information	
Prepare and disseminate a news release	
Develop a brochure or catalog	
Organize an opening	
Do community outreach	
Develop school program and kits	
Train volunteers and student interns	
Create virtual exhibit and tour	
Objects	
Preservation	
Conservation Treatments	
Reproduction	

**Figure 8.2. Checklist for Preventive Conservation in Furnished Historic Interiors**  
Adapted from HFC, Conservation Department. Use this list in conjunction with Figure 7.X

Action	Comment/date
<input type="checkbox"/> Allow sufficient room for traffic flow. <input type="checkbox"/> Group objects with similar conservation needs <input type="checkbox"/> Plan to rotate objects on exhibit. <input type="checkbox"/> Select objects for rotation <input type="checkbox"/> Develop schedule for rotation <input type="checkbox"/> Block UV by: Curtains Blinds Shutters UV screens, films, Plexiglas/Lexan	
<b>Temperature and Relative Humidity</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Obtain baseline information about the temperature and relative humidity. Interior/exterior of spaces [annotate] <input type="checkbox"/> Analyze the data. Take corrective actions as required. <input type="checkbox"/> Control the environment within the entire interior. <input type="checkbox"/> Place sensitive objects in the most stable locations, away from windows, HVAC vents, vibrations, visitors reach, and other potentially damaging impacts.	
<b>Particulate Contamination</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Monitor pollutants <input type="checkbox"/> Use high-efficiency filters in environmental systems. <input type="checkbox"/> Use high-efficiency particulate (HEPA) filters in vacuums. <input type="checkbox"/> Use localized filtration equipment as needed. <input type="checkbox"/> Use door mats, boot/shoe scrapers, booties, runners and dust covers to protect collections. <input type="checkbox"/> Install/maintain and repair weather-stripping, storm-windows and caulk as historically appropriate	
<b>Chemical Pollutants</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Monitor pollutants. <input type="checkbox"/> Incorporate chemical filters in the environmental systems. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide air circulation. <input type="checkbox"/> Select stable construction materials. <input type="checkbox"/> Aerate the interior space before object installation	
<b>Lighting</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Develop a lighting plan that responds to conservation criteria. <input type="checkbox"/> Limit total light exposure. <input type="checkbox"/> Filter all sources of ultraviolet (UV) radiation. <input type="checkbox"/> Control infrared radiation (visible light). <input type="checkbox"/> Exclude sunlight.	
<b>Biological Infestation</b> Complete and implement an IPM Plan	

<p>___ Examine objects for signs of infestation and active mold.</p> <p>___ Avoid introducing insects through props and unchecked exhibit materials.</p> <p>___ Control human behaviors that encourage infestation.</p> <p>___ Keep clean, and vacuum, dust and inspect items frequently.</p>	
<p>Physical Security</p> <p>___ Conduct a risk assessment.</p> <p>___ Provide the appropriate level of protection.</p> <p>___ Install individual alarms, monofilament, etc</p> <p>___ Use appropriate barriers to protect collections.</p> <p>___ Devise visitor routes to limit direct access to the objects.</p> <p>___ Review and update Opening/Closing procedures</p> <p>___ Lock doors to closets, cabinets, unfurnished rooms to prevent unauthorized access</p> <p>___ Follow good key control procedures</p> <p>___ Place firearms, weapons and other high value items away from easy reach and use additional security measures to prevent their unauthorized removal or theft. Use reproductions when necessary.</p> <p>___ Provide guided tours of interiors</p>	
<p>Emergency Preparedness and Fire Protection</p> <p>___ Develop fire protection and emergency response plans.</p> <p>___ Perform a risk assessment and address potential problems.</p>	
<p>Humidity-Control</p> <p>___ Ensure adequate air circulation.</p> <p>___ Provide appropriate access to controls.</p> <p>___ Select an appropriate passive or mechanical system.</p> <p>___ Provide safeguards for mechanical systems.</p> <p>___ Ensure that water pipes/installations aren't installed over historic furnishings.</p>	
<p>Choosing Conservation-Appropriate Materials</p> <p>___ Avoid adhesives within the object display area.</p> <p>___ Review the composition of commercial interior finishes.</p> <p>___ Isolate objects from painted or varnished surfaces.</p> <p>___ Use the least hazardous material available, and isolate objects from them.</p> <p>___ Isolate objects from problematic surfaces.</p> <p>___ View the HFC "Exhibit Conservation Guidelines" CD</p>	
<p>Furnishings Installation</p> <p>___ Support all parts independently over as large an area as possible.</p> <p>___ Stabilize objects from vibration.</p> <p>___ Ensure the security of framed works Avoid transporting objects into production areas.</p> <p>___ Inspect exhibit assemblages that affect objects during the production phase.</p> <p>___ Install archival barriers (Mylar, A/F paper, Volara foam, unbleached, washed Muslin, etc.) between objects and</p>	



furniture to prevent scratches, abrasion and wear	
<p>Maintenance</p> <p>Provide a maintenance manual that includes the conservation criteria.</p> <p>— Monitor and evaluate temperature and relative humidity.</p> <p>— Perform necessary maintenance to ensure continued high performance.</p> <p>— Keep the exhibit area clean.</p> <p>— Plan ahead for the safe movement of objects.</p>	

**Figure 8.3. Sample Agreement between Harpers Ferry Center, Department of Planning and Research and a Park**

### Overview of the Agreement

*The Project Agreement consolidates primary information and agreements related to a project. By providing team members and managers with clear information on the scope of the project, team members' roles, the proposed work plan, the budget, and the schedule, the project can proceed in a coordinated, effective way.*

### Project Description

The Harpers Ferry Center, Department of Planning and Research will provide the Park with a historic furnishings report [HFR] for five historically furnished rooms; recommendations for furnishings, textiles, and wall coverings for a conference area room; and recommendations for moveable furnishings in four outdoor areas located at the Park.

### Project Background

The Park acquired the estate adjoining the park boundary in 1963. The building houses the park conference center. At that time, the Park undertook extensive and not altogether sympathetic renovations of the property, removing much original fabric and disposing of many of the original furnishings.

More recently, however, the Park has redefined the use of space at the estate. A preliminary historic structure report [HSR] was completed in 1979, followed by a final historic structure report, historic landscape report and management plan in 1980. A master facilities plan completed in 1995 by a commercial group "seeks to combine interpretive, educational, conference and staff functions in harmony. The scope of work for the furnishings plan outlines the intended use of the structure. It states:

*The first floor rooms will receive restoration-quality furnishings, and serve as interpretive spaces, like a house museum. The second and third floors are used primarily for conference guests, and need to be furnished in a complementary style to the historic surroundings, while offering appropriate support for participants' needs.*

The Historic Preservation Training Center and Denver Service Center are handling the architectural planning, design, and construction for the restoration of the building. The Park Service's Buildings Conservation Center in Lowell, MA will do the paint analysis and contract for the restoration and recreation of the wall finishes in the historically furnished rooms. The HFC, Department of Planning and Research, as outlined in this project agreement, will provide documentation and recommendations for the historically furnished rooms, conference room, and adjacent four outdoor spaces.

### Project Team

Team Member	Title	Project Role
Name	Staff Curator HFC, Dept. of Planning and Research Tel: Fax: e-mail:	Will serve as project manger and historic furnishings curator. Will conduct research, compile evidence, and make recommendations for furnishings in historically furnished rooms, conference areas, and four specified outdoor areas. Will coordinate between all team members. Will provide cost estimates for implementing Historic Furnishings Plan [HFP].
Name	Editorial Assistant HFC, Dept. of Planning and	Will edit HFR, arrange for reproduction of drafts, make corrections, and arrange for the production of

	Research Tel: Fax: e-mail:	the final report.
Name	Historian Park Tel: Fax: E-mail	Will serve as liaison between furnishings planner and Park. Will consult with furnishings planner on amount of research required and will provide input on selection of furnishings.
Name	Park Curator Park Tel: Fax: E-mail	Will consult with the historian and project curator on amount of research required and will assist in selecting furnishings from the museum collection. Will provide access to objects and information about collection identification.
Name	Administrative Assistant Park Tel: E-mail:	Will provide input on furnishings needs and use of space by conference participants.
Name	Job Captain Architecture Group Denver Service Center	Will coordinate with furnishings planner on architectural issues such as placement of electrical outlets, HVAC vents, etc.
Name	Interior Designer	Will consult with furnishings planner, museum curator and park staff on choice of furnishings, textiles and wall coverings for conference area.
Name	Historical Architect	Will consult on architectural issues
Name	Chief Ranger	Designated by the superintendent to represents the park in the project
Name	Facilities Manager	Will consult with team members on all facilities-related issues
Name	Fire Protection Engineer	Provides input on fire protection issues
Name	Security Consultant	Consults and provides input on security issues

## Project Work Plan

The project curator met with park staff.— The project curator toured the estate, house and collection storage areas, examined the research materials available, and visited nearby familyowned houses to view objects that had once been at the estate.

While at the site, the project curator examined a large collection of historic interior photographs, and identified 150 to be duplicated and sent to her at HFC. Duplication fees are to be paid out of the park project budget. The park curator agreed to pull the photographs and/or negatives and have them reproduced, identified and sent to HFC. The project curator will contact family descendents to determine if they have any papers or objects that should be reviewed for consideration in the planning phase. The curatorwill travel to one or both locations if necessary to view the objects or materials.

The project curator will make at least one more site visit to record and photograph objects in the collection that could potentially be used in the five historically furnished rooms. The park curator will provide access to the collection and assist project curator with this task.

The project curator will prepare a HFR using all available photographic, documentary, and object evidence. Since the history of the estate has been covered very thoroughly in two HSRs, the management summary, administrative background, history of the structure and historical occupancy sections of the HFR will be brief and will refer to the aforementioned documents. The HFR will contain a list of interpretive objectives, an operating plan, and an evidence section, which will include excerpts from correspondence and the most important historic photographs. The HFR will contain a complete list of furnishings, including all lighting fixtures, for the hall (room XX), the library (room XX), the sitting room (room XX), and bedroom (room XX). The plan will contain recommendations for each of these rooms that will include the following:

- Type of floor covering, such as area rug, oriental carpet, etc.
- Type of wall covering, such as paint, wallpaper
- Type of window covering, such as drapes, roller shades, lace curtains, etc.
- Number and type of large furnishings, including free-standing lighting fixtures, such as five chairs, one drop-leaf table, two table lamps

Recommendations for specific wallpapers, textiles, and furniture will be provided during the production phase of this project, following approval of the HFR. Diagrams indicating the placement of furniture in each of these rooms will be provided.

The project curator will provide the park with two drafts for review and approval before the final HFR is printed. The Historic Furnishings Division will provide the site with five spiral bound, letter size printed reports. Photographs used as illustrations will be reproduced as laser copies in the final report. Fabric samples, wallpaper samples, and furniture samples will be provided to the site during the production phase of the project.

After the completion and approval of the Historic Furnishings Report, the Park may choose to contract with the Historic Furnishings Division, Harpers Ferry Center, to implement the plan. Additional funding will be required at that point to cover the acquisition of objects, wall coverings, and textiles as well as salary and travel. Funding levels will be based on cost estimates provided in the Historic Furnishings Report.

## Project Schedule

Begin research	December 2006
Initial site visit and meeting with staff	December 14-16, 2006
First draft of Historic Furnishings Report	June 11, 2007
Comments on first draft due	July 22, 2007
Second draft of Report due	September 2007
Comments on second draft due	October 2007
Five copies of final plan due at site	November 2007

## **Project Budget**

The total project budget for the HFR is \$58,000. This includes all salaries and travel expenses for HFC staff, salary and travel expenses for the interior designer, all research costs, costs of reproducing 150 historic photos and three copies each of two drafts and providing five spiral bound copies of the final report.



**Figure 8.4. Annotated Guidelines for Completing Historic Furnishings Reports prepared by Harpers Ferry Center, Department of Planning and Research.**

Also see at <http://www.nps.gov/hfc/products/furnish/furnish-plan-hfr-guide.htm>

## Table of Contents

### Acknowledgments (if appropriate)

### Administration

Resource managers find a synopsis of the historic furnishings report (HFR) in the "Administration" section. This synopsis helps managers zero in on issues to consider during review and approval of the HFR itself, and issues that may arise as the plan is implemented at the site. This section briefly addresses:

- how much interior documentation exists for the site
- the plans for furnishings and the basis for those plans
- what other media may be called for in the HFR
- how visitors will experience the site (guided tour, self-guided tour, or some other means)
- how the furnishings plan is tied to a larger restoration package
- what architectural changes may be needed for implementation of the plan.

The "Administration" section of the HFR also explains the management background and history of the site. Other topics usually covered in this section include: the site's enabling legislation and establishment, the status of the site on the National Register and the site's preservation history, the history of use by the National Park Service, and any previous furnishings or other media installations. This section also includes a list of other research and planning documents that pertain to the site, such as general management plans, interpretive prospectuses, historic structure reports, and collection management plans.

- **Interpretive Objectives** – In this subsection, the HFR covers the interpretive objectives of the site's furnished space(s), and addresses the site's general interpretive objectives. Guidelines for personal services interpretation and recommendations for specific interpretive messages that can be conveyed in the furnished spaces are also included here.
- **Operating Plan** – In this subsection, the HFR cites hours and seasons of operation, how visitors access the site (self-guided, guided, fixed-point interpretation, or other), staffing needs for interpretation and maintenance, and a visitor circulation pattern. Barrier needs are discussed here too.

### History

This section includes the complete history of the site's interior spaces, their appearance, and how they were used over time. This section's purpose is two-fold: it forms the documentary basis for the furnishings plan and it provides a resource manual for personal services interpretation (and other kinds of interpretive media).

An introductory summary of sources is also included here.

- **History of the Structure** – This subsection of the "History" section includes only a brief discussion of the structure's history, especially if the structural history is conveyed in another document (usually the historic structure report, or HSR). It references any other documents that discuss the structure's history, if such documents exist; otherwise it addresses the structural history only to the extent needed as background for the furnishings history.

- **Historic Occupancy** – This section covers the building’s occupants, including household or other staff, as fully as possible (provided this information does not appear in another document), including biographical information, dates of occupancy, and information about people’s lives and activities in the structure. A subsection on room use may be appropriate, particularly if room use changed frequently over time.
- **Evidence of Room Use and Furnishings** – This subsection describes the interior appearance of the structure over time as fully as possible, including the contents of each space and their arrangement, when and where items were acquired and dispensed of, where items were produced, and any known repairs or other kinds of work to the furnishings. It includes interior finishes and lighting fixtures, unless that information is contained in an HSR.

A separate section detailing information on furnishings of closely-related structures is included in the HFR if site-specific information is lacking, and if such information is needed to develop a furnishings plan.

### **Furnishings Plan**

This section guides the furnishings installation and provides a permanent record of object placement for park staff. Some HFRs will be limited to history sections and will not include a furnishings plan.

- **List of Recommended Furnishings** – The furnishings list includes each object’s name, documentation or basis for inclusion, park catalog number or, if an object is not in the park collection, whether a reproduction or period piece is needed.
- **Related Media** (if appropriate) – Plans for accompanying media, like panel exhibits, interior wayside exhibits, or other media are included here.

### **Illustrations**

### **Appendices**

### **Bibliography**

**Figure 8.5. Determining Costs of Furnishing Historic Interiors, based on a Harpers Ferry Center, Department of Planning and Research Document**

To determine the overall cost of a furnishings project, you need to estimate the costs of each phase of the project. These phases include:

- planning
- preparing the HFR
- acquiring historic furnishings
- preparing the interiorspaces
- structural repairs and upgrades
- implementation

**Historic furnishings costs**

The cost for historic furnishings varies. The following variables need to be considered when calculating costs:

- period of interpretation
- quantity of furnishings
- style of furnishings
- cost of collecting original pieces [how collectible they are]
- historical association of original pieces
- number of rooms to be furnished
- cost of acquiring period pieces
- reproduction costs for
  - furnishings
  - floor coverings
  - wall coverings

**Planning costs**

Planning costs vary less than the cost of production. They are generally in the range of \$40-60,000 per site, depending on the number of rooms to be furnished. Small structures less than 500 square feet are estimated at \$20,000 each.

**Production costs**

These costs are based on two elements:

- period of interpretation
- condition of original or period furnishings at the site which will be reused in the updated furnishings

Typically, the earlier the period of interpretation, the more expensive the cost of historic furnishings production. There is one notable exception, the very earliest period, 1600-1700. Because of the scarcity of original objects from this period, most furnishings are reproductions rather than antiques. A single estimate, covering all periods, is included for lower cost utility structures such as barns, stables, jail cells etc. A portion of the production funding, usually 10% is allocated for object conservation.

Period of Interpretation	\$ per square foot
Utility structures	\$75.
1600-1700	\$200.
1700-1800	\$375.
1800-1840	\$338.
1840-1870	\$225.
1870-1910	\$225.
1910-1930	\$210.

**Object preparation costs**

Production costs vary based on the condition of the original collection. The following factors apply:

Collection condition	Multiplying factor
Good	0.1
Fair	0.2
Poor	0.8
Outdated	1.0

For example, a 500 square feet project from the period 1840-1870 with an original collection in fair condition would be computed as follows:

500 (square feet) X \$225. (period 1840-1870) X .2 (factor for fair condition)  
Total: \$22,500.

**Facility costs****HVAC****Fire detection/suppression and intrusion system upgrades**

**Figure 8.6. Outline of recommended practices for historic furnished interiors** adapted from “Standards for Preservation & Guidelines for Preserving Historic Furnished Interiors” of the *National Park Service Northeast Region’s Guidelines for the Treatment of Historic Furnished Interiors*, Northeast Museum Services Center, NPS, with Mid-Atlantic Association of Museums, New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, and Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 2006.

The table of contents below provides an overview of the topics covered in this publication. For detailed information, go to:

[http://www.google.com/custom?q=National+Park+Service+Northeast+Region%E2%80%99s+Guidelines+for+the+Treatment+of+Historic+Furnished+Interiors+&sa=Search&client=pub-1415334591037307&forid=1&ie=ISO-8859-1&oe=ISO-8859-1&cof=GALT%3A%230000FF%3BGL%3A1%3BDIV%3A%23FF0000%3BVLC%3A333333%3BAH%3Acenter%3BBGC%3AFFFFFF%3BLBGC%3AFFFFFF%3BALC%3A0000FF%3BLC%3A0000FF%3BT%3A000000%3BGFNT%3A333333%3BGIMP%3A333333%3BLH%3A39%3BLW%3A100%3BL%3Ahttp%3A%2F%2Fwww.mercuras.com%2Frefdesk\\_logo\\_sarch\\_LP\\_v3.gif%3BS%3Ahttp%3A%2F%2Fwww.refdesk.com%3BLP%3A1%3BFORID%3A1%3B&hl=en](http://www.google.com/custom?q=National+Park+Service+Northeast+Region%E2%80%99s+Guidelines+for+the+Treatment+of+Historic+Furnished+Interiors+&sa=Search&client=pub-1415334591037307&forid=1&ie=ISO-8859-1&oe=ISO-8859-1&cof=GALT%3A%230000FF%3BGL%3A1%3BDIV%3A%23FF0000%3BVLC%3A333333%3BAH%3Acenter%3BBGC%3AFFFFFF%3BLBGC%3AFFFFFF%3BALC%3A0000FF%3BLC%3A0000FF%3BT%3A000000%3BGFNT%3A333333%3BGIMP%3A333333%3BLH%3A39%3BLW%3A100%3BL%3Ahttp%3A%2F%2Fwww.mercuras.com%2Frefdesk_logo_sarch_LP_v3.gif%3BS%3Ahttp%3A%2F%2Fwww.refdesk.com%3BLP%3A1%3BFORID%3A1%3B&hl=en)

## Introduction

What is a Historic Furnished Interior?

Character-defining Elements of the Historic Furnished Interior.

Character-defining Features of the Historic Furnished Interior

Preservation Planning and the Research of Historic Furnished Interiors

Some Factors to Consider When Choosing an Appropriate Treatment for the Historic Furnished Interior

Special Requirements: Accessibility Considerations, Energy Efficiency, and Health and Safety Code Considerations

Using the Standards and Guidelines for a Preservation, Rehabilitation, Restoration, or Reconstruction Project.

## Standards for Preservation and Guidelines for Preserving Historic Furnished Interiors . Standards for Preservation

Introduction

Identify, Retain, and Preserve Historic Features and Materials

Protect and Stabilize Deteriorated Historic Features and Materials as a Preliminary Measure Maintain Historic Features and Materials

Conserve Historic Features and Materials

Limited Replacement in Kind of Extensively Deteriorated Portions of Historic Architectural Features

Accessibility Considerations, Energy Efficiency, and Health and Safety Code Considerations

## Preservation Guidelines

Interior Spaces

Interior Design

Interior Architectural Features and Finishes

Furnishings

Mechanical Systems

Accessibility Considerations, Energy Efficiency, and Health and Safety Code Considerations

## Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Furnished Interiors

Standards for Rehabilitation

Introduction

Identify, Retain, and Preserve Historic Features and Materials

Protect and Stabilize Deteriorated Historic Features and Materials as a Preliminary Measure . Maintain Historic Features and Materials

Repair and Conserve Historic Features and Materials

Replace Deteriorated Historic Features and Materials



Replace Missing Historic Features and Acquire Replacements for Missing Historic Furnishings  
Alterations/Additions for the New Use  
Long-term Storage of Removed Features  
Accessibility Considerations, Energy Efficiency, and Health and Safety Code Considerations

### **Rehabilitation Guidelines**

Interior Spaces  
Interior Design  
Interior Architectural Features and Finishes  
Furnishings  
Mechanical Systems  
Accessibility Considerations, Energy Efficiency, and Health and Safety Code Considerations

### **Restoration Guidelines**

Interior Spaces  
Interior Design  
Interior Architectural Features and Finishes  
Furnishings  
Mechanical Systems  
Accessibility Considerations, Energy Efficiency, and Health and Safety Code Considerations









